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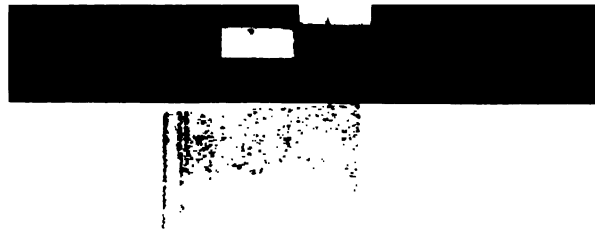

WAY STATIONS

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

GEORGE MANDEVILLE'S HUSBAND

THE NEW MOON

THE OPEN QUESTION

BELOW THE SALT

THE MAGNETIC NORTH

THE DARK LANTERN

COME AND FIND ME
(WILLIAM HEINEMANN)

THE CONVERT
(METHUEN)

VOTES FOR WOMEN: A Play in Three Acts
(MILLS & BOON)

THE FLORENTINE FRAME
(JOHN MURRAY)

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO?
(WILLIAM HEINEMANN)

ELIZABETH ROBINS

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Elliott & Fry

WAY STATIONS

BY

ELIZABETH ROBINS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

JN981.1913
R7

Printed in 1913

TO

MARGARET DREIER ROBINS

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Of this collection of speeches, lectures, and articles dealing with the more salient aspects of the Woman's Movement, some have been printed only in America. Those which have not yet appeared in print anywhere are:—

The Prisoners' Banquet.
The Suffrage Camp Revisited.
At Newcastle Town Hall.
To the Women Writers' Suffrage League.
At Crowborough, Sussex.
At the Albert Hall, June, 1912.

Also those sections under the heading Time Table.

Never having been one of the more active participants in the events dealt with by this book, my infrequent appearances in print or on platforms have each and all been the direct result of some special call or crises. When the various speeches, etc., were collected, they seemed on review to be meaningless enough, lacking any statement of the circumstances which elicited them. I have therefore linked these papers together by a brief narrative, which gives, so far as I am aware, the only succinct account in existence of the main line of the Militant Suffrage Movement.

E. R.

Chinsegut, Hernando County, Florida,
January 28th, 1913.

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I

WOMAN'S SECRET

BY WAY OF PREFACE (*Published originally by the W.S.P.U. through the Garden City Press*)

WITH all the sense of partisanship that the Women's Movement in England may arouse in certain natures, there is one occasional feature of it (a feature far more infrequent than has been alleged) that some of us deprecate. It is the assumption that men have consciously and deliberately initiated all the injustices from which women suffer. This is at once to suppose men more powerful than they have ever been, and more wrong-headed.

So far as I know them, the great majority of the women leaders in reforms share a sense of painful wincing, when they hear women talking as if all men were in a conscious conspiracy against the other sex.

Realising our own imperfections, a sense of something very like shame descends upon us on those occasions when we are asked to listen to pleas that would make out all women to be Angels of Light and all men Princes of Darkness.

Looking as far into the matter as we are able, we find the chief difference between ourselves and men

to lie in the fact that men are expected to struggle against adverse circumstance, whereas they have made it our chief virtue not to struggle.

Nevertheless, when we begin to inquire into the origin of the order under which we live, we cannot believe in our hearts that men really ever got together and said : " Go to ! we'll enslave the women ! " On the contrary, we find a difficulty in doubting that we all merely followed our lines of least resistance, and that these lines brought women so constantly to the exercise of patience at the cradle and the hearth, and brought men so constantly to the exercise of physical force on the battlefield or in the chase, that the hands of each became subdued to that they worked in.

Women's hands, as civilisation advanced, grew softer and smaller; men's grew larger and more muscular as they exercised their power to grip or strike. The arrangement between the sexes seems to have come about without blame or credit on either side. It was the best working arrangement the uncivilised could devise. The trouble with it to-day is that it long ago served its purpose, and became outworn. We all, men and women alike, have arrived at a place where we must devise something better. But we shall not come by any fair understanding of the past, or by any helpful scheme of betterment for the future, till women realise and frankly admit that men, equally with themselves, are victims of circumstance.

The object of these pages is twofold. One is to put forward a plea which, if it were generally allowed,

might serve better than anything else to do away with age-old misunderstanding. My second object is to set forth what seems to be the chief reason for the too long continuance of the situation in which we find ourselves, and to suggest that the cause of it is woman's inarticulateness in the past.

To speak of her as inarticulate is not to forget that she has long been called the voluble sex. Her supposed inability to keep a secret is with many an unchallenged article of faith. Yet no secret has ever been better kept than the woman's, as those may dimly have divined who speak of the sex as enigmatic.

In every tongue, at various stages of the world's progress, we have had the man's views upon every subject within sight—including woman. What the woman thought of it all, no deepest delver in dusty archives, or among ruins of dead cities, has ever brought to light. The sagas, the histories, song, epitaph, and story—the world's garnered treasure of record, whether it be of the life of action or the life of the spirit—they are all but so many reflections of the mind of man.

From India to Egypt, from Greece to Yucatan, the learned are labouring to bring the Past to light. All over the civilised world are those who wait with eagerness to hear of the recovery of some lost masterpiece—thrilling when the cable tells of a Menander speaking for himself at last, instead of through the mouths of others. All the learned world waits to hear what men of the Minoan civilisation felt and thought. But the living may wait till they, too, are dust; or, while their brief day lasts, they may read all the

books in all the tongues of earth, con every record in clay or stone or papyrus, and still know only half the story. Schliemann may uncover one Troy after another, six separate cities deep, and never come the nearer to what Helen thought. All that is not silence is the voice of man.

Some would wrest the significance of this into a reproach to woman, seeing in it the most sweeping of all the indictments against her belated claim to stand—in civilised communities—on an equal footing with her brother man. But to read history so is to understand man's part in it as little as woman's.

If I were one of the dominant sex, I think I would not be so sure, as many good men seem to be, that they are competent to speak for women. If I were a man, and cared to know the world I live in, I almost think it would make me a shade uneasy—the weight of that long silence of one-half the world; even more uneasy if, being a man, I should come to realise the strange persistence of the woman in her immemorial rôle. When I should hear women chattering, I almost think I might not feel it so acute in me to note that with all their words they so seldom "say anything." What if they know better? What if it is by that means they have kept their secret? For let no one think the old rule of feminine dissimulation is even yet superseded.

Some measure we get of the profundity of that abyss of silence when we see, even in these emancipated times, how little of what woman really thinks and feels gets over the footlights of the world's big stage.

Let us remember it is only yesterday that women in any number began to write for the public prints. But in taking up the pen, what did this new recruit conceive to be her task? To proclaim her own or other women's actual thoughts and feelings? Far from it. Her task, as she naturally and even inevitably conceived it, was to imitate as nearly as possible the method, but above all the point of view, of man.

She wrote her stories as she fashioned her gowns and formed her manners, and for the same reason; in literature following meekly in the steps of the forgotten Master, the first tribal story-teller, inventor of that chimera, "the man's woman."

There was no insuperable difficulty in the way of her playing "the sedulous ape," as is amply demonstrated by the serried ranks of competent and popular woman-novelists.

She is still held to be in no way so highly flattered as by hearing that men can hardly credit her book to be the work of a woman.

The realisation that she had access to a rich and as yet unrifled storehouse may have crossed her mind, but there were cogent reasons for concealing her knowledge. With that wariness of ages, which has come to be instinct, she contented herself with echoing the old fables, presenting to a man-governed world puppets as nearly as possible like those that had from the beginning found such favour in men's sight.

Contrary to the popular impression, to say in print what she thinks is the last thing the woman-novelist or journalist is commonly so rash as to

attempt. In print, even more than elsewhere (unless she is reckless), she must wear the aspect that shall have the best chance of pleasing her brothers. Her publishers are not women. Even the professional readers and advisers of publishers are men. The critics in the world outside, men. Money, reputation —these are vested in men. If a woman would win a little at their hands, she must walk warily, and not too much displease them. But I put it to my brothers: Is that the spirit of the faithful chronicler? Is it not far more the spirit of the notorious flatterers and liars who, in the times gone by, addressed those abject prefaces to powerful patrons—testimonials which make us laugh or blush according to our temper? Little as we can judge of those princes and nobles from the starving men of letters who licked their boots, hardly more can men discover to-day what women really think of them from the fairy-tales of feminine spinning, however much the spinster "makes faces," as Stevenson would say, and pretends, "Now I am being Realistic!"

What she is really doing is her level best to play the man's game, and seeing how nearly like him she can do it. So conscious is she it is *his* game she is trying her hand at, that she is prone to borrow his very name to set upon her title-page. She does so, not only that she may get courage from it to talk deep and go a-swashbuckling now and then, but for the purpose of reassuring the man. Here is something quite in your line, she implies; for lo! my name is "George."

Her instinct for the mask is abundantly justified.

No view is more widely accepted than that every woman's book is but a naive attempt to extend her own little personality.

We do not commonly find the man-made hero confounded with the author. When a man takes some small section of the arc of a character or a dramatic situation, and (capable of intellectual honesty, and precisely of leaving himself out of the Saga) if he follows the curve so rigidly that he describes the complete circle, his faithful projection of the illusion of life is rewarded by his critics' saying: "What a power of imagination the fellow has!"

If a woman but attempts this honourable task——an affair of strong self-control and of almost mathematical accuracy—if she happens to bring it off, her critics pat her on the back with an absent-minded air, while they look about for "personal experience."

Or they do not even look about. They are content to say: "This is so like the real thing it must be a piece of verbatim reporting, done by a person whose merit is a retentive memory. These life-like scenes are autobiography. The heroine is naturally the writer's self, made to look as she thinks she looks, or as she wishes to heaven she might!"

The opinions, the aspirations of this character or that—they are the woman-novelist's own. The fact that, as the books multiply, her heroines are found to be widely different in outer aspect and in spirit—that is a trifle easily negligible. If there is no heroine, why, then the woman-writer must be the boy of the

story. Otherwise it must be that she has imagination, which is plainly preposterous.

If a woman had written "Macbeth," it would have been obvious that she had murdered her husband; or, if he wasn't her husband, the more shame!

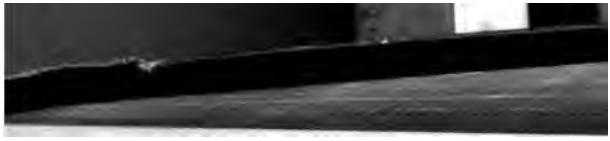
Until society is differently constituted let no one expect that women in general will adventure lightly upon truth-telling in their books.

The older generation may even have the excuse that the doom of the false witness has overtaken them. In the end they believe their own lies.

Even the young and clear-eyed may stand abashed before the great new task, and for another generation the woman may still write her book but to weave another veil, the while she makes her bread—or perhaps her cake.

If the faculty for telling the truth is in itself a kind of genius, as has been said, the use of our mere talent for reproducing the current ideals has certainly been the safer exercise. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that whatever special knowledge we had, whatever was new to the world of letters or disquieting to private life, women writers have kept to themselves as successfully as did the Egyptian women buried thirty centuries ago beneath those tons of granite whereon men graved their version of the ended story.

Of one form of testimonial man has been chary. Often touchingly ready to invest some woman with every gentle virtue, he has usually made an exception of humour. Some show of excuse he has had from two causes. Humour is of humble origin, ethically



speaking, and seems to have been sired by cruelty—the pleasure in another's pain or loss of dignity that found diversion in the ruder kinds of horseplay. It seems likely enough that woman's natural sympathy and her sheltering compassion may have prevented her from sharing the bumpkin view of comedy which, in the spacious times behind us, found in Jew-baiting and insanity side-splitting entertainments. Woman may be pardoned for wondering if it may not have been in part her humaner instinct about some of the stock jokes of the race that earned her the reputation of a constitutional lack of humour.

In these slightly more enlightened days, when the less inarticulate—called by men "the exceptional woman"—has been allowed this quality of humour so long withheld, she has taken her "exceptionalness" here, as elsewhere, on trust. For any wide knowledge of her own sex is, perhaps, the newest of all woman's acquisitions. Almost every woman has known certain men very well indeed. Other women have been, even for her, the enigma they remained to men.

Now we begin to see that this same sense of humour—being a "small-arm," light, and adapted to delicate handling—seems to be an even commoner blade in the feminine armoury than in that loftier hall where are ranged the heavy artillery—the crossbows and blunderbusses of the other sex.

But since woman's field of action has been the home, she found out millenniums ago that humour there makes for success only under the strictest rules.

She has learned to welcome it as a sign of unbending in her lord. She has even cultivated it (in him) by a

process, pelican-like, of offering her own breast; or, to modify the figure, she made her contribution to the domestic cheer by submitting herself to be the target for his pleasantry.

She must have early seen how, when the bow is in the other hand, and her arrow finds *him* out, the point is so little appreciated that she has been fain to give up marksmanship.

If she needed consoling for the resultant rumour of her lack of skill, she has found it in the reflection that no man has ever been known to long for humour in his nearest relations, least of all in the wife of his bosom.

The notion that woman is without this faculty is merely one of the many ways in which men advertise her success in keeping her mental processes to herself. A slave's accomplishment, perhaps. Certainly women have learnt few lessons as well.

What wonder that the age we live in is significant and revolutionary beyond any other, since for the first time since the dawn of civilisation the world is beginning—barely beginning—to be told what the secretive half of the human race really thinks and feels.

That we are not monkeys disporting ourselves in trees is due, so say the wise, to the home-making proclivities of one branch of the anthropoid family. This home-making proclivity was nothing else than the female's instinct to provide the best possible environment for her young—an added tenderness for those weakest breeding in her an added inventiveness.

This was the frail-seeming but sure foundation on

which arose the many mansions of human achievement.

A case might be made out by anyone so foolish as to wish to divide responsibility and to apportion merit—a case to prove that civilisation is peculiarly women's affair. Certainly it is difficult to see how the upbuilding of the race could have come about without its passing through two phases, which owed their initiation not to masculine but to feminine development. These two aspects of the same significant tendency were :—

1. The woman's giving up of brute competition (where she excelled, be it remembered) ;

2. Her specialising in the home (accepting the yoke of silence and of service).

Woman purchased civilisation at the price of her liberty.

When our immemorial forefathers and foremothers lived in cave and tree-crotch, the female asked no consideration and got no quarter, not even in the performance of her vital function. She had no need of either. She was (in spite of the drain on her physical resources) quite equal to the task of taking care of both herself and her progeny.

So well able was she to bear the double burden—this major share in the perpetuation of the species —that where it was a question of protecting her young, she was accounted a foe more terrible than any male of her kind.[1]

No nonsense in those days about her being the weaker sex.

[1] This was published before Mr. Kipling's tribute to "the sex."

No hint of her being a creature for whom special allowances must be made—till she, the first specialist, began to specialise. Not till she gave up gambolling in the airy leafage and took to making a home; to nursing not alone the young, but the sick and the old; making rude coverings as shelter from the cold, brooding long upon the dead, domesticating fire for her first handmaiden; not till then did she cease to compete on the lower plane of brute strength and cunning with the male.

If these first women, making their wholly instinctive choice, had not "chosen" the keeping of the hearthstone warm by staying at home to feed the fire; if women of the past had not sat by the sick and suffered with the dying, not only would there never have been a Woman Question, there would never have been a Civilisation.

Now, civilisation means control. It means a harnessing of forces in external nature and in the spirit of mankind. Woman, with the child to teach her, practised the first lessons in the New Learning on herself. She engraved the strange new maxims on her savage heart. Be patient; be patient; and again and always, and down to the dark, mysterious end, be patient. Above all, let the fierce grown-up child, man, suppose he is a hero and a king. He is above all things vain; and if he is to do his new work of bringing in the food and defending the house against the enemy—if he is to do these things in good heart—he must be allowed to think himself a monstrous fine fellow. No douche of cold criticism or shaft of wit must be turned upon him. That they sometimes were; that

the early woman now and then forgot her part, and was promptly reminded of it by an exercise of brute force, is proved by those amenities of mediæval argument—the ducking-stool and the gossips' bridle.

Since her tongue was the one thing men feared most, no variety of female has had more scorn heaped on her than the woman who had a grievance and dared talk about it. The silent woman was the paragon. Oh, well for the man who praised her that he could not see her heart! The truth about himself and the mind of his mate, these were things to be hidden. For the rest, he was ruled by the two primal hungers, though clumsily and at cost. His greed in both paid him back in disease. If even to-day he explodes in rage at hearing fragments of the long-suppressed truth, who can blame the instinct of self-preservation that has held the woman silent hitherto upon inconvenient themes?

'From those dim ages wherein the beginnings of speech took shape—the day when the first phrases were spoken instead of barked or brayed or chattered—from that day to this, amongst women, they have been few and far between who betrayed the conspiracy of silence about the things that matter. Innocent or crafty, she has filled the void with pretty twittering. In all recorded history only a single voice here and there to rouse in men a gaping wonder and a deep disquiet. Then all made smooth and soothed again by some form of that phrase, "An exceptional woman," with the prompt rider, "sexless." And so you others, beware!

Since it is by sex you live, take heed lest in some

unwary hour you, too, become exceptional, and so, by a well-known philological necessity, decline through "singularity" to "egregiousness" and "insolence."

If I have admitted that hitherto men have had little opportunity of knowing that their point of view is not the only possible one, it seems necessary to add that they do not make the presentation of another an easy matter. There is no woman, I imagine, however old or isolated, who does not value the good opinion of men. Her mistake has been that she has valued it beyond a thing more valuable.

Many a mere looker-on at the game must have been stung by the reception accorded the little handful of women who have ventured into the public arena, not as artists, story-tellers, or mere commentators upon manners, but as earnest and practical contributors to the gravest problems of life.

If upon those who are erroneously held to represent the prevailing temper of the Forward Party among women—if, upon a few, a sense of the discouragement administered by men presses so hard that, here and there, it finds expression in bitterness—that result is surely natural enough.

My point is that it is not only "natural." Like most unreflective, instinctive revelations it has its special significance. This particular manifestation is perhaps more valuable than even the inquiring mind has realised.

If men find themselves publicly represented by women as being *en masse* not very noble or very effectual, they should see in the circumstance a proof

merely that a woman here and there has followed the masculine example in taking certain instances for the type of creation's mould.

Yet here again we have a case where it has made a vast difference when the shoe was on the other foot.

When a man proclaims his poor opinion of women, lumping them all together in a general condemnation (after the fashion of certain so-called philosophers), saying the worst he can of all because he has had bad luck with one or two, he is not told that he is an hysterical or a narrow-minded creature.

Misogynist views have not been held to be so much a failure of intelligence or good temper in the man, as a failure, black and all-unpardonable, in women.

No one seems to have resented the ludicrous unfairness of the Kundry *motif* in Art. Public opinion canonised the superficial Augustine, who in his ignoble estimate of women hesitated to spare even his long-suffering and most excellent mother.

He, too, was called a saint who, with such generous urbanity, said of woman that she was : " A necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painted ill."

If we do not blame the disappointed man for thinking meanly of women, neither should we in justice, or in logic, blame the woman who has found men falling too far below her ideal for her to accept stolidly her disillusionment. If man has not scrupled to show his seamy side to woman, why should woman scruple to admit the seamy side ? Will the world ever arrive at a fair estimate of both sides till the day comes when

woman presents her view without fear and without reproach ?

In the occasional bitterness—so much less common among the Suffragists, for instance, than has been supposed—there may be for the wise man a degree of enlightenment that soft words could never bring. His enlightenment may be hoped quietly to rectify the current view of woman's contentment with her false position. In default of such peaceful readjustment, woman's reaction from the enforced attitude of subservience can hardly fail to result in making more general and more prolonged such temporary unfairness as may already exist in her judgment of men.

The swing of the pendulum to the opposite extreme from the old deification of the masculine principle, might even (contrary to our faith) seem to be the only way of arriving at that fairness of each to each, the equilibrium of the future.

Which consideration brings me to my plea: that men should for our common good embrace such opportunity as comes their way of taking a turn at trying to understand some of the points of view possible to the opposite sex. I would like to ask them to remember that if our parts had been reversed, if woman had been the dominant partner, men would have exercised precisely those arts of dissimulation and of long silence, alternated with brief outbursts of bitterness, that always characterise the unfree. When the few women who can bring themselves to speak out plain, do so in men's hearing, even those who wish well only to themselves—if there are such men—should listen with a little of the patience that, for

centuries untold, women have bestowed upon masculine utterances.

The fairer-minded will remember, too, that exposition is an art difficult to the novice. As in the other arts, skill in this comes only by the practice we have been denied. Advocacy is a profession whose doors are still closed on women. Our brothers must therefore try to see through our imperfections of presentment something of that truth we have so long and so religiously withheld.

TIME TABLE

October, 1905—December, 1906

In the year 1905 the English public was rudely reminded of the fact that there were little groups of people, here and there about the world, who believed in the principle of Woman Suffrage.

Up to October of that year this belief had not seriously inconvenienced anyone.

On the eve of the return to power of the Liberal party a startling and, as it proved, highly inconvenient question was asked at a political meeting in Manchester—a question which now sounds natural, necessary, modest.

After listening to the array of fair promises made to men, two delegates of the Women's Social and Political Union asked what women had to hope from the incoming Government.

The great majority of the general public never knew that the Press reported the incident unfaithfully. Perhaps the reporters themselves did not know that when the meeting was announced the women had sent a request to the speaker of the evening, asking him to appoint a time to receive a deputation. Certainly the public did not know that this written request was not answered, nor even acknowledged.

Nor did the mass of women understand that putting questions at political meetings (to the person who was there precisely for the purpose of outlining his party's plans, and presenting its claims to confidence) was a common practice—jealously claimed and respectfully accorded—to men. We did not know that on the evening in question men had, as usual, interjected their questions,

wise or foolish, and had been answered with patience and consideration.

Even had we known the precise facts, I, for one, would not have understood their full significance, any more than did those in charge of the meeting.

Nothing is easier than to be wise after the event. Each generation has not only to pay the penalty of its own blindness and blundering; each has to pay the "death duty" on that legacy of blindness and blundering which has been left them by those who are gone.

In common with the promoters of the meeting, who smiled, or frowned, at the question: "Will the Liberal Government gives votes to women?"—the general public either denounced or laughed at this sudden intrusion of the other sex into the public counsels of men.

Few women had, as yet, any conception of the gulf between men's civility in private to women whom they know, and their incivility in public to women they do not know. Half a dozen highly instructive years were to pass before a Chancellor of the Exchequer was to amaze and further enlighten English women, by inciting the baser elements in public gatherings to maltreatment worse than brutish of women whose crime was an inconvenient reminder of political promises unfulfilled. Seven years were to pass before the secret contempt of the public man for women's concern about public affairs was to find expression in the words of the member of the Illinois legislature voting against a children's Bill urged by Jane Addams and other experts—"those in favour are just a parcel of women."

In 1905 few of us would have believed in the possibility of such an act, or such an utterance, from an accredited public servant. Prior to 1905 all but a negligible fraction of women (and practically the whole masculine population) shared the belief that the half of the world which had control of public affairs, had in addition not only the ability but the will to safeguard the interests of women and children equally with the interests of men.

If the protest against this view had not been silenced for the moment behind prison walls, the echo of the voices raised in Manchester would have been long in reaching the outside world. The prison wall acted as a sounding-board. Many of us who did not yet understand the message could not escape from puzzling at its meaning. We heard that one of the women belonged to that class supposed to be the special charge and concern of the Liberal statesman—a mill hand, whose knowledge of women's needs was gained among the textile workers. The organised women in this industry, to the number of 96,000, had for some time been patiently asking for the same power to safeguard their lives as men of their class possessed.

The other voice raised at the Manchester meeting was that of a girl who had distinguished herself at the University—the daughter of a well-known man who lived and died labouring for the public good.

Both of these "delegates" were quite young; both gave an impression of being physically frail. What, we asked, lay behind their public insistence upon a view shared, after all, as even the casual reader knew, by John Stuart Mill and certain other intelligent, reputable people? What was involved in this old demand that young and able women should press it, in spite of blows in public, and the vague horrors of prison?

The question was answered for those who followed the English suffrage movement in the succeeding months.

My own experience is that of many others who had little understanding of and no particle of sympathy with the first militant act. The speeches, lectures, and explanatory notes which follow show how from point to point I, and persons like myself, travelled the road of enlightenment.

. . . . . .

The year preceding the Prisoners' Banquet (given by the older Suffrage Societies to members of the new) saw

the first active opposition, during elections, ever offered by women to the Government in power.

Astonishment on the part of the general public that this course should be pursued in the face of constant abuse gave way, inch by inch, to a recognition that there must be more in this question of the vote than the mass of women had suspected. Those of us who were still disposed to discount the Suffragist's insistence on the urgency of the matter, could no longer doubt its importance when we saw the strange shifts, the hypocrisies and brutalities in which certain men took refuge rather than concede the point, or even debate it fairly.

I do not for a moment say that all opposition was of this nature. But there was enough of this, enough of every kind, to convince a growing number that, for good or ill, the privilege of putting a cross on a ballot paper conferred a power as far-reaching as the roots of civilised society. Not so much the militant women as those men who employed any and every means to drown the militant voices were responsible for sharpening our ears.

The first great meeting of the newly constituted Liberal forces took place under the leadership of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman on December 21st, 1905, at the Albert Hall. The women present who dared ask that persons who are taxed should also be represented were flung out. Up and down the country they and others went, reminding Liberal leaders of Liberal principles, and paying for their temerity in bruised bodies and abuse.

The non-militant Suffragists fared no better in their endeavour to win attention to the wishes of the unenfranchised. The Women's Co-operative Guild, with 20,700 members; the Women's Liberal Federation (76,000); The Scottish Women's Liberal Federation (15,000); The North of England Weavers' Association (100,000); The British Women's Temperance Association (109,890); The Independent Labour Party (20,000); the Textile Workers (96,000) and others joined in a

manifesto urging the need of giving women the protection of direct representation in Parliament.

Many a woman learned her first lesson in present-day political values through realising that the earnest prayer of those tens of thousands of orderly, patient women had not been heard so clearly, or accorded a hundredth part of the attention won by the two militant voices crying in the wilderness of Manchester Liberals.

In anticipation of the opening of Parliament, The Women's Social and Political Union, with a capital of £2, opened a branch in London. Those who get their information from the newspapers might suppose, then as now, that the new Suffragists confined their activities to disturbing other people's meetings. As a matter of fact, they were tireless in organising meetings of their own.

They wrote to the new Premier to ask if he would receive a deputation. The new Premier regretted that he could not spare the time. The new Suffragists regretted his mistaken view of the relative claims upon his time. They gave him notice of their intention to call at the official residence. In spite of discouragement, they succeeded in giving a message to a secretary. To make sure of its not being forgotten, they wrote again, asking that a time might be appointed for a personal interview. The answer returned was evasive. The Suffragettes, as they were now popularly called, went once more to Downing Street. The police were summoned, and the women were arrested. They were, however, promptly released upon the intervention of the Premier, who now agreed to receive a deputation.

Before the date fixed for receiving the representatives of the various societies, a Woman Suffrage resolution was brought before the House of Commons. On the evening of April 25th, 1906, this resolution was being talked out with every circumstance of indignity and insult, while a gallery-full of women looked down through the grille upon their champions and protectors.

The authorities were, not unnaturally perhaps, afraid of some demonstration of disgust. As the time drew near for closing the debate, and before the indignation of the women found any open expression, they saw the back of the gallery filling with policemen. Realising that their time for action was now reduced to a few moments, two women called out to the legislators below: "We refuse to have the resolution talked out." "Divide! Divide!"

Through the obnoxious grille a third woman thrust a little flag, and the now famous legend "Votes for Women" made its first appearance in the House of Commons.

The gallery was forcibly cleared, and those who could not see below the surface of things said and believed (with a simplicity often displayed since) that but for the impatience of the Suffragettes the resolution would have been carried, and women would have promptly been invited to inscribe their names on the parliamentary register.

The deputation to the Prime Minister on May 19th elicited the fact of his belief in and sympathy with the cause. Besides that—nothing but a recommendation of patience (a recommendation which he afterwards rescinded in favour of a policy of "pestering").

The Suffragettes left Downing Street to assemble a little later in Trafalgar Square. Similar indignation meetings were repeated throughout London and the provinces in the days that followed. The old Suffragist policy of wasting time and energy in making ineffectual friends was definitely abandoned by the W.S.P.U. The new policy of fixing responsibility where it belonged was vigorously prosecuted. In the course of demonstrations at the meetings, or the houses of official persons, more and more women were arrested and sent to prison.

Every demonstration made the issue clear to new friends. Every arrest won fresh recruits. The release of each batch of prisoners was the signal for a great meeting of welcome.

These functions were presided over by Mrs. or Miss

Christabel Pankhurst, or by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, who with her husband had come into the Union shortly after the establishment of the London Branch.

This is not the place for any detailed account of those two women of genius and founders of the Union, Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel. But I am sure they would agree with me that nothing had happened since the founding that was so fortunate for the Union as Mrs. Pankhurst's enlisting the sympathy and support of the Pethick Lawrences—the woman with her great aptitudes for public life, her imagination, and her fervour; the man with his distinguished qualities of mind and heart, his level-headed business capacity, combined with a generosity of spirit which made his gifts of money to the cause seem small beside those gifts of greater price.

In spite of new and stringent rules governing the admission of women into even the outer courts of the House of Commons, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and others accompanied Mrs. Pankhurst to the lobby on October 8rd, 1906, the day of the reassembling of Parliament. A message was sent to the Prime Minister, through the Chief Whip, asking whether the Government proposed to do anything that session in the direction of granting votes to women. The Liberal Whip returned with the answer that the Government could not hold out the smallest hope of their taking any step in the direction desired by the women.

Upon this, a protest took place in the lobby. Some of the women stood on the settees and addressed the crowd which was waiting to interview members. Mrs. Pankhurst was thrown to the ground, and among those subsequently arrested were Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Annie Kenny, Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, and many others. At Rochester Row a curious and instructive trial ended in the prisoners being sent to Holloway Gaol.

The by-election at Huddersfield presented a good opportunity for acquainting another section of the public with the Government's interpretation of Liberal prin-

ciples. The size and success of the Women's Social and Political Union's meetings, the inconvenience to Liberal speakers of trying to explain why Richard Cobden's daughter was in prison for the crime of showing that she had inherited that concern about the public welfare for which Liberals revered the memory of her father—these causes led the Government to liberate Mrs. Cobden Sanderson and her companions before the expiration of their sentence.

The Constitutional Suffragists, able at that time to see the service which was rendered to the old cause by these new adherents, determined to give the released prisoners a public welcome.

That the principle of militancy had, in the early days, the sympathy and support of the National Union of Suffrage Societies is a fact recalled by the circumstances in which the following speech was delivered, and is one of the two reasons why an otherwise unimportant utterance may be printed. The other reason is that Liberal objectors to militancy were herein reminded that out of the mass of women asking for the vote (women of divers temperaments, upbringing, and political creeds), the section most furiously attacked by Liberals were those members of the Women's Social and Political Union who showed a disposition to agree with one of Mr. W. E. Gladstone's most famous utterances—quoted at the Savoy banquet for the first time in connection with the Women's Movement. This quotation has been recalled often since, and with peculiar effectiveness in the 1908 trial of the Suffrage Leaders, during which Mr. Lloyd George and the then Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, were put into the witness-box, cross-examined by Miss Pankhurst, and reminded of the words of the father of one man, and greatest among the leaders of the party to which both witnesses belonged.

II

THE PRISONERS' BANQUET

Speech at Savoy Hotel—December 11, 1906

Mrs. Fawcett, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am called upon to propose a toast that needs little commending here. I think we all realise that the publicly expressed sympathy of a representative gathering, such as this, is a fact of no small significance.

But an even more wonderful thing is true. There is now a large company outside these walls who say when the question of Woman Suffrage is broached: "I am in favour of it." We have it on the authority of the late Prime Minister that four hundred and twenty Members of Parliament stand committed to this Cause.

We are told that the gracious-sounding phrase "I am in favour" is on the lips even of Cabinet Ministers.

There is something almost monotonous about the unanimity with which the eminent are in favour of this measure.

We do hear that legislators still betray a disposition to be dumb, in public, before the question, yet even they (the great majority of them), if speak they must, feel constrained to proclaim their favour.

The strange thing is that so much favour should

be so ineffectual. I hope fair-minded men will remember that, when they criticise "methods."

They are not to forget that their "favour" left the question where it was.

It is rather as if you were told: "Oh, yes, you women may cultivate your gardens. But you mustn't use spades. They are too heavy for your delicate hands. And they are dirty—spades are! Besides, spades are for men!" That was settled as long ago as the days when Adam delved and Eve span. I don't doubt but Adam thought, as the remnant of the unenlightened do still, that it would be dangerous to discuss public affairs with a woman.

To allow her to contract the unfeminine habit of expressing her opinions, would be to teach her that she shared the most effectual weapon in all man's armoury. For no one denies the Power of the Word. I saw a fresh exemplification of that power the other day, at Huddersfield. I saw politicians and worthy burgesses stopping in the streets certain ladies who are here to-night; I heard men, young and old and middle-aged, arguing and remonstrating! Not because women believed this or that, but because they were saying they believed these things—and saying so, most reprehensibly, where everybody could hear.

This attitude on the part of men is, I gather, not peculiar to Huddersfield. Before there was a Huddersfield, from the earliest times, after men had subdued woman's wilfulness, taught her backbending, taught her feet to run at their bidding and her hands to fetch and carry—when every other member had been brought under control, men still had dark mis-

givings about woman's tongue. So they praised silence, and they heaped scorn on the talking woman. To this day when they lament that now and then she so far forgets the lesson of the ages as to use her tongue in private, men shake their heads and remind one another that the end of the world would come if once she were allowed to talk in the Council House.

No one knew this better than the women who did the talking on October 28rd.[1] It was their way of announcing the end of the world. The end of the world as it *had* been. You all know how they paid the price in that grim place, His Majesty's Prison at Holloway. When we think of what they went through there, when we think of what they have suffered from the tongues and pens of people safe outside—oh, very safe, indeed, from ever running a risk for conscience' sake! safe from daring to do anything unpopular; impregnably safe from any temptation to cast in their lot with the weak and the "unrepresented"—when we think of these things to-night, we are proud of the type of woman the suffrage cause has forced to the front. And in the Woman's Cause what aspect more important than this?—that they should be women capable of taking "the long view," able to realise that it may be necessary for the achievement of a higher, better order that a temporary disorder should stir the sluggishness of the world. History tells us that is the spirit in which fundamental political Reform is born. In defence of Mr. Chamberlain's threat in 1884 to march 100,000 men from Birmingham to

[1] In the lobby of the House of Commons.

London in support of the Franchise Bill—Mr. Gladstone put his views on record in these terms: "I am sorry to say that if no instructions had ever been addressed in political crises to the people of this country except to hate violence and love order and exercise patience, the liberties of this country would never have been attained."

Now the lesson conveyed in these words is a lesson learned more readily by men than by women. We, you know, are the law-abiding section of the community.

In those parts of the world where women are enfranchised, they go on obeying the old laws until by constitutional means they can get them bettered.

We have present, I see, a recent visitor to the Isle of Man, who was shown, among other public institutions, a prison and the excellent accommodation for fifty men and nine women. "Where do you put the other women-prisoners?" asked the traveller. "Oh, we never have more than nine," was the answer. As against fifty of the opposite sex! Yet the Isle of Man is a sort of Isle of Woman, since, as you know, women have votes there. But whatever evil effect their voting may entail, it does not make law-breakers of our sex. Perhaps the greater proportion of men-criminals is due to some defect in the education of men. We remember the answer given by a rural teacher to the question, "Whether proper attention was being paid to the morals of the boys under his care?" "Oh," he said, "we don't teach morals here. That belongs to the girls' department."

It is out of that department that this new influence has come. Already it has wrought so powerfully that fewer and ever fewer are found willing to say—in public—that women should be asked to do their work in the world's garden without the essential spade.

No one denies that the parliamentary vote is the working man's best tool. The other day a letter was published in "The Times," on the subject of industrial conditions in New Zealand. That letter told us, "the ballot-box is the only social weapon."

Those persons who would persuade us that this fact has no application to our sex, must count on our not knowing that 82 per cent of the women of this country are wage-earning women. They must count on our not knowing that since the extension of the male franchise the wages of men have gone up, and the wages of women have gone down. They must count on our not knowing that the average wage for a working woman is 7s. 6d. a week; while the average wage of the working man is a pound.

To the honour of our sex these facts have only had to be known to the better-off women in order to inspire many of them with a sense of responsibility towards their less fortunate sisters. Women are at last learning to look to women for help.

While we gratefully acknowledge the support of many good men, we owe to our opponents a great and valuable discovery: and that is *the education as well as the power that comes of women's working together.* I will admit that I think it is a better and a more civilised combination when men and women labour together for the same ends. But that ultimate co-

operation will come the more easily and more honourably, after we have learnt how strong we are when women support women.

We see every day now the thing that we were told would never happen. We see women of different education, different fortunes and associations all pulling together, all working with enthusiasm for a common end. The first thing that struck me about the first person I came to know in the Women's Social and Political Union was, her faith in her co-workers and her hearty admiration of them. Women have looked at the world so long through the eyes of men, that they must bear with us for a little space (till the readjustment comes) while we look at affairs from what is called the woman's point of view.

For instance, we agree that a voice soft and low is an excellent thing in its place. But if you are being robbed, or if you are drowning and you say "*Help*," who is to blame if nobody notices? If your child is perishing in a burning house, the woman who stops to think what the man in the street will think of the timbre of her voice is a poor creature and a guilty mother.

I may say, in conclusion, that while it seems obvious that women will presently obtain the right to vote "upon the same terms" (as the phrase goes) "as that right is or is to be enjoyed by men," I am far from sure (though here I speak for myself alone), I am far from sure that the "right" will be much "enjoyed" by the women who are called on to pay the heaviest price for it. It is an argument for haste that should the Suffrage be granted to-morrow, the

world may still have to wait for the generation that is to grow up in the exercise of public duty, before women can take the personal satisfaction in it that most men do. I should like to emphasise this as my last word, since the issue is overlaid with cheap charges of notoriety-hunting and of hysteria.

Many of us believe self-control to be the highest expression of civilisation. But we also believe that nothing less than a sense of duty and a resolute self-mastery could bring women of the character of those who have done most for this Cause to face the misunderstanding, and the hideous discomforts, the lasting hurt to health that they have been called upon to bear. Every fair-minded person must realise it is very hard for women to face these things. It was George Eliot, I believe, who spoke with envy of those who could lead what she called "the sheltered life." When woman as a sex considers her own dignity and satisfaction alone, it is the shelter that she chooses. I am reminded of that happy tribe in the inclement North called the Achéto-Tinneh, which being interpreted out of the Esquimaux tongue is: *The People Who Live Out of the Wind.*

Enviable folk these, for in the North it is not the still cold, but the wind that kills. The vast majority of women would belong to the Achéto-Tinneh if they could with honour—though some of you may tell me that is due in turn to defects in our training. But, as I say, the women of the future, brought up in the exercise of public duty, may find it not duty alone, but pleasure as well.

For this generation, the fighting and the sacrifice.

But Richard Cobden's great-granddaughter will be able to say with the poet:

> "Lo . . . how deep the corn
> Along the battlefield."

I have the honour to propose the toast: "Success to the Cause of Women's Suffrage."

TIME TABLE

December, 1906—June, 1907

Meetings and demonstrations continued; arrests were frequent, and the violence of the stewards at political gatherings (and, in those days, the violence of the police in the streets) were a painful feature of the advance of the Woman's Question into the sphere of practical politics.

In February, 1907, three days before Parliament met, the non-militants assembled at Hyde Park Corner, and marched in rain and mud to Exeter Hall, where they called on the Government to redeem the promises made to Constitutional Suffragists.

In this same month a so-styled "Parliament of Women" was convened in Caxton Hall, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Pankhurst, to consider the "King's Speech" of the day before. As this document was found to contain no mention of the needs or wishes of women, the meeting resolved to send a deputation (under the conduct of Mrs. Despard) pledged to reach either the King's representative (the Prime Minister) or prison.

That was the first occasion upon which I saw mounted policemen riding down little bands of women and girls; and even (as I was myself to experience) charging against solitary women whom the momentum of a driven crowd, or the onset of excited horses, had detached from a group of friends.

There was an abundance of strange new knowledge to be picked up that night, even by those who had not joined the little deputation headed by the white-haired benefactress of East London poor. But others have

described the scenes which ended in the arrest of fifty-seven bruised, dishevelled women and two men. The little room at the rear of Caxton Hall was filled with the hurt or spent, who had been rescued by their comrades and taken to shelter.

The prisoners, including Mrs. Despard, were given the now usual summary police-court trial, and sent to Holloway Gaol.

The languishing cause of Woman Suffrage was now so thoroughly alive that, upon Mr. Dickinson's introduction of a private member's Bill for the Enfranchisement of Women, those who were opposed to the measure felt the necessity of forming a Woman's Anti-Suffrage Society—the first that the growing seriousness of the issue had called into being.

As a sign of the waking-up of the hitherto politically inert mass of women, the " Anti " Society was welcomed by the farther-sighted among Suffragists. In the death of the old indifference the first decisive battle was won.

The Anti-Suffragists presented two petitions to Parliament against Mr. Dickinson's Bill during the month of March, 1907. When these documents came to be officially examined, they were rejected by the Petitions Committee of Parliament as " informal." The names were found to be written on separate sheets which did not set forth the object for which the signatures were designed. There was nothing to show that the persons giving their names knew for what. Another fact damaging to the authenticity of the petitions was that whole batches of signatures were discovered to have been written in by a single hand. But, as has been pointed out, had these petitions, bearing 87,500 names, seemed genuine enough to be accepted by Parliament, they would have been a negligible number as compared with the subscribers to the great memorials in support of Woman Suffrage.

The more practical women had come to realise that, could the question have been much affected by petitions, women would now be voting.

So, while the great body of militants were carrying forward, from divers centres, the work of educating the public to understand a more effectual policy—that policy, in the form of direct pressure on the Government, was being actively prosecuted.

An instantaneous good result was manifest in the clearing away of some of that fog of futile "sympathy with the Cause," which had so long hidden from women the more serious obstacles between them and political freedom. The Prime Minister (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman) found that a mere expression of "belief in the principle" did not satisfy these terribly practical Suffragettes. He saw himself obliged either to go forward or to go back. He went back—on the plea that Mr. Dickinson's Bill was not sufficiently democratic.

Women were to find that always a Bill for their enfranchisement is either too democratic or not democratic enough to suit so-called friends of the suffrage in Parliament. The measure was talked out by a Liberal Member.

A second "Women's Parliament" was held at Caxton Hall on the afternoon of March 20th, 1907. Another deputation, led this time by a Suffragist from the old school, Lady Harberton, made the attempt to carry to the Prime Minister a resolution passed unanimously by the meeting.

The police were out in great force, and the struggle that followed was the most protracted that the women had yet engaged in. Caxton Hall was kept open from 2 p.m. till late in the evening—a refuge for the disabled. After an interval of rest and succour, those sufficiently recovered went back into the fight. Mrs. Mary Leigh, who was later to shorten a five years' sentence of penal servitude to a fiercely contested hunger-strike of forty-four days, was arrested on this occasion, the first of many times. A hundred and thirty women were sent to prison.

Throughout the spring of this year a vigorous campaign was carried on at the by-elections. The women found how many friends they had even amongst the remote

and provincial public. Equally gratifying, they found how more and more the friends and agents of the Government objected to the presence of Suffragettes at by-elections—drawing larger audiences than Liberal speakers could, and (most inconvenient of all) telling those audiences the history, past and present, of Liberal treatment of women.

This and subsequent campaigns did much to strengthen the forces of the Women's Social and Political Union by developing a body of first-rate public speakers. Aside from great natural orators like the Pankhursts, some of the best public speakers in England (or, as I believe, in any country) are the Suffragettes trained in the rude school of the hustings.

III

THE FEMINISTE MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND

(Published in "Collier's Weekly," New York, June 29, 1907)

I AM one of those who, until comparatively recently, was an ignorant opponent of Woman Suffrage. I felt that what we women needed was more education, more discipline, rather than more liberty, not realising that the higher discipline can come only through liberty.

I was not alone in my error. It turns out that not only have men a great deal still to learn about women, but that women have a great deal still to learn about themselves. I have been prosecuting my education in this direction almost daily since a certain memorable afternoon in Trafalgar Square when I first heard women talking politics in public. I went out of shamefaced curiosity, my head full of masculine criticism as to woman's limitations, her well-known inability to stick to the point, her poverty in logic and in humour, and the impossibility, in any case, of her coping with the mob.

I had found in my own heart hitherto no firm assurance that these charges were not anchored in

fact. But on that Sunday afternoon, in front of Nelson's Monument, a new chapter was begun for me in the lesson of faith in the capacities of women. Talking about it afterward with a well-known London editor, I found him sorrowfully admitting the day was coming when the vote could no longer be withheld from women. "But when they get it," he asked, "won't we find they've lost more than they've gained?" He spoke of the deteriorating effect of public life on men. If it bore so hardly on the stronger masculine fibre, what effect must it have on the delicate, impressionable nature of woman? How shall she preserve what is best in character after tasting the intoxication of political victory or the humiliation of political defeat?

"I am ready to believe you," he said, "when you tell me these Suffragists can rule and sway the London crowds. But isn't it very bad for women, all this publicity and concentration of attention on themselves?"

I answered that I was perhaps not so bad a person to whom to put that question, since I had spent a good part of my adult existence under conditions where I could see the effect on character of just these fierce tests, save that in the theatre they operate innocent of political significance.

In common with many others of my old craft, I had seen how the actor's necessary preoccupation with things of the imagination may divorce him from the larger realities of life. His necessary concern about himself tends to impoverish his intellectual life, narrowing down existence till for him all the world's

a stage in very truth, and all men merely "parts." But the great difference, in the common effect on character, between doing work on the stage and doing it in the political arena, seems accounted for by the difference between the ambition that is obliged to concern itself with one's own advantage, and the ambition that is obliged to concern itself with the advantage of other people.

If I am to judge by the women I see working to win the suffrage in England, there is something civilising, ennobling, in giving up your life to the furtherance of a great impersonal object. When women, such as these I speak of, stand up in public to talk reform, their high earnestness, their forgetfulness of themselves, lends them a dignity that made my answer to the question of the London editor as easy as it was honourable to the disfranchised sex.

We have got to a point in England where there is little need, and indeed little opportunity, to combat argument. The opponents of Woman's Suffrage own, with engaging frankness, that their prejudices against the innovation are irremovable. If these obstructionists are not too old in years or in spirit, they will presently be advancing to the stool of repentance. If, however, their prejudices are indeed irremovable, they themselves are not. Those who, in the natural order, are to take their place will see the matter otherwise, for the future is on the side of woman's freedom. So keenly is this felt that in the hundreds of meetings, public and private, held throughout this country for the ventilation of the subject, the prime difficulty encountered of late in

getting up a debate is to find anybody who can be induced to oppose the notion. Has it been discovered that all the telling arguments, witty or wise, are on the side of the reform ?

The old-fashioned opponent, with his jargon about "short hair and the shrieking sisterhood," sees all his poor little dingy rags of ridicule blown to the winds of heaven, and he seems able to find nothing new.

One of the signs of the reserve force behind the movement is that everything ministers to it. The police magistrate sends a group of unknown women to Holloway Gaol. They come out public characters, hot with tales of abuses in the prison system and the crying need for matrons and women inspectors. The authorities try to avoid repeating their error by making all such inconvenient prisoners thereafter first-class misdemeanants, and thus ensure their seeing less and having less material with which to stir the public conscience. But the public are quick to detect the fear behind the seeming leniency of the authorities.

Then again, at a later stage of the agitation, the police magistrate, in trying a fresh batch of prisoners, endeavours to rouse public indignation against the leaders of the movement by sternly rebuking them for allowing a mill girl of seventeen to come up from the provinces to assist in a London demonstration, in the course of which the girl was arrested—that being nothing less than what she had come for. She was a Lancashire delegate, representative of hundreds more who could not come themselves. The magistrate was

full of a noble rage at " the cruelty of turning a girl of such tender age loose in London," as he expressed it. He seemed to count on setting men's hearts aflame at the bare idea of a young girl in the streets without her mother. That she should be in the London streets to testify to her interest in the laws governing women's honest work, that was indeed shameful!

" Why, this child," the magistrate said, " should be at school! " And the outburst of wise and manly tenderness was reported in every paper in the land.

The working women opened incredulous eyes. They are so used to hearing their own ignorance urged against their claim to vote, that they were stark amazed to find how strangely benighted are these great London gentlemen about the conditions governing the lives of the women they make laws for. School at seventeen? Why, this girl, like many more, had been earning her living in a mill since she was twelve, rising in the dawn and tramping, cold and half-fed, to her work, and returning wearily through slums whose haggard realism left this prematurely old " hand " of seventeen little to learn from London, even if she had no friends here, which of course is not the case. No woman, however lonely, who joins the English Suffrage Movement but has friends. . . .

TIME TABLE

JUNE, 1907—MARCH, 1908

IN a reconstitution of the Union which took place in September, 1907, the faith and affection which Mrs. and Miss Pankhurst and their immediate allies had inspired were put to a triumphant test. That these were the people, and the only people, who could conduct this particular agitation at this most difficult and critical moment, was recognised by the great majority who had come in contact with that very remarkable group.

The following month brought another event of far-reaching importance, not only to the fortunes of the Union, but to the organised effectiveness of the whole progressive movement.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence launched a newspaper, designed to give the public that information which Suffragists had hitherto looked for vainly in the Press; information not only about the more sensational side of the propaganda, but about the steady, ceaseless educational work that was being done, as well as general information bearing on the political status of women. No paper has ever been served with such devotion and ingenuity as "Votes for Women." Its astonishingly rapid growth from a little two-page sheet, issued monthly, to the weekly paper known and quoted all over the world, is due not only to the combination of political insight and business ability of the Pankhursts and the Lawrences, but to the vigorous co-operation they possessed the secret of winning from their friends and followers.

Members of the Union responded to the call that they

should charge themselves with the business of securing regular subscribers, and that they should buy batches of the paper to distribute broadcast. Then realising that what people get for nothing they are likely to value at nothing, women who had never sold anything in their lives before stood in the streets offering "'Votes for Women,' one penny." Not only were tens of thousands of copies sold outright in this way, and many new subscribers added; the sellers became centres of a quiet but enormously effective propaganda.

Seeing the paper solidly established, with its circulation steadily increasing, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence handed it over to the Union. Hundreds and thousands of people who could not come to the meetings were drawn into the movement through the medium of the paper. Where the mass of newspapers reported only the more sensational militant acts, readers of "Votes for Women" were kept informed, as well, of all the many-sided educational propaganda which was tirelessly going on, though unreported elsewhere.

Between May and October the Union alone held 3000 meetings. Other political meetings were left unreminded of all this active interest women were taking in public affairs, unless those other meetings were addressed by Cabinet Ministers. Their joint responsibility for the Government neglect of women's claims was not allowed to be forgotten. The Suffragettes on these occasions were almost invariably set upon by the stewards, and not infrequently struck at by Liberal "gentlemen" sitting in the audience—a proceeding which taught many an onlooker more about politics in a minute than a statesman could teach in a lifetime.

The harsh and costly lesson never failed to make new friends for the Cause, or to convert some tepid adherent into a fervid worker. Those who could not help in one way sought and found other ways. Women whom natural disqualification or ill-health prevented from serving as public speakers, gave money to defray the

expenses of others. When there was no more money to give, they got up entertainments; wrote gratis for the paper; sold it in the streets and at theatre doors; gave lectures—and in these lesser ways showed their sympathy with and their admiration of the women who were bearing the burden of by-elections and meeting worse than blows as deputation after deputation forced its way to Westminster.

In February, 1908, the arrest of fifty more women for their share in this errand led to the turning up of an old Act of the time of Charles II, relating to "Tumultuous Petitions." In future, women were warned, anyone of the unenfranchised sex who came too near the Houses of Parliament with a petition was to be tried and punished on the plan invented a couple of centuries before, to harass and defeat the early strivings of men towards political freedom.

Perhaps the significance of the parallel discouraged the threatened application of the Act. For after the next demonstration (which followed smartly upon the threat) Mrs. Pankhurst and the other women were given the same insulting and now familiar police-court trial, and the usual alternative of paying a fine or going to prison.

While they were in prison another Woman's Enfranchisement Bill scored a majority of 179 in its second reading in the House of Commons. However, its promoter, Mr. Stanger, became entangled in that "parliamentary procedure"—which women are so often asked to regard as respectworthy and ineluctable. The advantage of the majority in favour was lost.

Three years later I was to ask a Liberal Member of Parliament what had brought him to believe, as he now professes, in the righteousness and the inevitability of the triumph of Woman Suffrage. "It has come to be a practical issue," he said.

Thinking to hear of some new light on woman's needs, or on man's discovery that her Cause is his own, "When did you come to 'see' it?" I asked.

" When the women raised a fighting fund of £100,000," he said.

Liberalism.

At the Albert Hall meeting of March 19th the idea of the treasurer, Mrs. Lawrence, had been to leave Mrs. Pankhurst's seat on the platform empty till, after an appeal for funds, the great arm-chair might be filled with the cheques, bank-notes, and promise-cards collected. By one of those happy chances which often fall to the lot of the Union, the prison authorities (upon what pretext I do not now remember) forestalled the date of Mrs. Pankhurst's release. Her unexpected appearance in the hall created an immense sensation. The eloquence of the empty chair, from which so much had been hoped, was pale and ineffectual beside the appeal made by the woman who came out of the grey solitude of a prison cell straight into the brilliance and enthusiasm of a Woman's Social and Political Union mass meeting.

In the space of a few moments £7000 was subscribed to the fighting fund.

But for a struggle so great as the far-sighted saw still lay before women, the problem was ever how to raise more money and make more converts. From every angle, political and private, those waiting to be convinced must be reached and drawn into the ranks.

IV

THE SUFFRAGE CAMP REVISITED

A Lecture given at the Portman Rooms, London, March, 1908

Miss Christabel Pankhurst, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have come a great way to perform a small duty. Yet far as London is from Florida, those leagues of land and sea may not, in some eyes, seem to constitute the chief obstacle in the way of my addressing you about a matter of political moment.

The English people have often listened to comment upon English affairs from men of foreign birth. But, I am told, for a woman, not a subject of the King, to pick a flaw in that proudest of your national boasts —the Freedom of the Briton—would be to show herself unwarrantably meddlesome.

There are two considerations which prevent my holding that view, even though recently reminded that it is shared by one of the military heroes of this country. He has asked me how a person who has not convinced her own countrymen of the wisdom of enfranchising women, dares raise her voice in this domestic quarrel ?

There are obvious reasons why most people confine their activities to the land of their birth ; though to do so has not been the distinguishing characteristic

of the English. You had a saying that, years ago, touched the imagination of the world. "No slave," your fathers said, "could breathe in English air." The moment one of our unfranchised negroes set foot upon your soil, that instant he stood forth free.

Ladies and Gentlemen, that was not what happened in my case. I can no more acquire citizen rights in England, than I can claim them in Kentucky, or in Florida. I find something fitting, therefore, in the fact that one of the sex discriminated against should point out where the English boast breaks down.

But my real answer to the soldier's charge before mentioned, and my answer to any objector here is, first and foremost: this of yours is not a "mere domestic quarrel." It is the working out of the most fundamental problem of civilisation.

All who keep abreast of foreign news know in how many directions, and how far, your English voices are reverberating. I myself am too recently returned from America not to know how closely over there they are following your agitation, getting from it enlightenment and courage for their own different task. The eyes of all women are upon the English Suffragists. The hopes of thousands of women you will never so much as hear of, and the fate of their children's children, are largely in your keeping. So my first answer to the suggestion that I should attend to my own affairs is: this *is* my affair. The battle-field is English soil, but the issue belongs to the human race.

My second answer to the charge of officious interference is that your Cause is even peculiarly my affair.

England owed me nothing, and has given me the best I have known. I have lived in London more than twice as long as I have lived in any other one place since I was born. I have paid taxes here for seventeen years without diminishing my debt. Here in London I have spent the best of my life and have done here the most rewarding of the little work I have accomplished. Living in your midst for all these years, having found happiness as well as bread and friendship here—how is it possible that I should take so much at your hands and feel I need not give you even sympathy in return ?

Just as I find it impossible to divorce the interests of men and women, so in this long debt of mine I cannot remember women's claim upon me without acknowledging the claim of men. Yet as my conception of the larger good for this country and for the civilised world does not march with—that of my soldier-friend, for instance, let us for a moment look into the causes that lie at the root of our difference.

In the first place, let those of us who are Suffragists admit the present state of things to be the common misfortune of men and women.

Some of you may not agree with me when I say that women have had a large share, if not in bringing about the conditions we are attacking, at least in keeping them as they are.

I must assume that you are all familiar by this time with the arguments in favour of Woman Suffrage and with the answers to the few—the beggarly little array of serious objections. Among the reasons why

this Cause does not march forward to an even speedier triumph than ultimately awaits it, I will speak to-night of three:

1. The unreasoned, instinctive clinging, on the part of men, to the idea of male superiority.

2. The comparative poverty of women, even in well-to-do families.

3. The deadening illusion entertained about, and shared by, the "Exceptional Woman."

Taking these obstacles in their order, we have first to deal with the masculine prejudice in man's own favour. This, if looked at fairly, is nothing worse in its origin than the feeling every healthy boy (or girl) brings with it into the world: namely, that there is nothing upon the earth so important as itself. The current idea of the difference in value of the two sexes, seems to grow out of the fact that in the case of the girl, the wholly natural and quite essential first conception (having served its purpose) is early corrected and "put away" along with other "childish things." This comes about, not through any special grace or wisdom on the part of woman, but through the lessoning of circumstance.

In man, the preliminary notion about his place in the universe is corrected late by an effort of the reason, or it is indulged in to the end.

I am afraid there is no doubt but what, in the common survival of this early view of man's importance, we women have our discreditable share.

Who among us here can lay her hand on her heart and say: I never flattered the idea of "sex superiority" in any man? I never tried, in the cause

of peace and pleasantness, to perpetuate for an hour that ancient error?

Among all the people in this room I do not feel sure of—but one.

I am not that one.

Can you believe that women have not had a share—a very large share—in obscuring the truth for such as the eminent Professor, who recently wrote to a London paper, to say he feared men were not opposing with sufficient energy this lamentable and growing agitation for Woman Suffrage? He sounded a piercing bugle-call to waken his too-confiding brethren to their common danger. Did men realise, he asked, all that was being imperilled? Did they not know that if woman got the Vote she would no longer care to make the home beautiful? Not only that. He says she would give up "dancing and singing" for man's diversion. Much as man, according to this sprightly biologist, would lose by the arrangement, the opposite sex would gain nothing. "Woman," says the man of science, "can only gain" (these are his words) "by continuing to astonish man by all she does for his Enchantment and Delight, to serve him and to crown his life. . . ."

Now, could even a man who for forty years has peered through a microscope, could he bring away from his studies in Natural History this comic-opera view of the uses and the value of one-half the species, unless Womankind had breathed upon the lens and fogged it?

That we ourselves have borne false witness seems to be the chief indictment against us. The eminent

gentleman I have quoted[1] is one of thousands who are ludicrously misled. Women are, to the gay Professor, simply flowers strewn along his gladsome way —or weeds in some obscure by-path. He is spared all realisation of the whirlwind of laughter that swept through at least one drawing-room wherein his scientific views were read aloud to an exultant company—each one vying with the other in conjuring up rapturous pictures of dancing-girls and fair women proudly devoting the flower of their days to performing enchantments for the "delight and astonishment" of the Professor of Biology. No echo of that laughter will reach him. Be sure he has found some woman who, in honest stupidity, or in cheerful mockery, will applaud him and, in so far as she can, will realise for him his Mohammedan heaven.

But not only in private life have women borne false witness. Those who doubt this have only to look through the books written by women for the guidance of women—books, English, French, German, and American, published in the early or middle years of the last century. These works are more instructive to us to-day than they ever were to the poor souls

[1] Sir —— K.C.B., F.R.S., in the "Daily Telegraph," March 3, 1908, ". . . fear that the great business of making the nest beautiful, producing and tending the young, nursing the sick, helping the aged, consoling the afflicted, rewarding the brave, of dancing and singing and creating gaiety within the charmed circle where political contests and affairs of State are of no account, would be neglected and without honour. In the end these amenities of life would probably fall into the hands of commercial companies and be sent out at so much a head—imported from Germany. Woman would not be the gainer, for she can only gain by continuing to astonish man by all she does for his enchantment and delight, to serve him and to crown his life—she will only suffer by becoming 'independent.'"

for whom they were written. The books to which I especially refer were not cast in the frivolous form of fiction. They were offered as serious guides to life. Since they were, in point of fact, early contributions to the Woman Question, and since some of them enjoyed a wide popularity, they had their share in maintaining, if not in creating, the conditions we are face to face with to-day. These writings help us to understand our Professor and many another man.

Let us then, in the cause of enlightenment, consider for a few minutes one of the more successful of these publications—an excellent example to offer for your consideration, since it was written by an Englishwoman, and had a large circulation in America. How much harm it did over there I cannot say—but I am confident our Professor's male progenitor recommended it warmly to his womankind.

I came upon this priceless work in the form of an American reprint, which saw the light in 1843. "The Wives of England," as it is called (dedicated, by special permission, to Her Majesty the Queen), is written by Mrs. Ellis, author of "The Women of England" and of "The Daughters of England." Having dealt separately with the various aspects of her sex, Mrs. Ellis, it would seem, wound up by presenting woman collectively as "The Poetry of Life." That, at all events, is my interpretation of the final work set to her credit. "The Poetry of Life" has not yet come my way. As a significant "et cetera" appears even after "The Poetry," we are left to grope in the void as to what more Mrs. Ellis found

to say about her sex. Still, you will see, from the quoted array of works, that she was no raw hand; and that in a day when it was not a commonplace for women to write books, our Mrs. Ellis had such encouragement that she persevered. You may read on the cover of an American reprint in a quotation from an admiring critic, that "'The Wives of England' is a work fitted to promote the happiness of every family circle." If you read farther you come to believe in the validity of that boast.

In Chapter I, called "Thoughts before Marriage," Mrs. Ellis calls upon the weaker, and as she says, "consequently more easily deluded party, to pause and think again." If, she says, without a smile, you feel ashamed of the gentleman before marriage, "there is little probability that you will afterwards evince toward him that respect and reverence which is right and seemly in a wife." "Although," she says, "I am one of the last persons who could wish to introduce in any plausible form, to an upright and honourable mind, the bare idea of the possibility of breaking an engagement; yet as there are cases," etc. etc. . . . "I cannot help thinking," she goes on, "that, of two evils, it is in this case especially desirable to choose the least; and to prefer inflicting a temporary pain, and" (mark this) "*enduring an inevitable disgrace* to being the means of destroying the happiness of a lifetime." She gives her advice with evident trepidation: "I am aware," she says, "that the opinion of the world and the general voice of society are against such conduct" (as a girl's daring to admit before it was too late, that she

had come to realise she did not love the man), " and I am equally aware that no woman ought to venture upon breaking an engagement, on such grounds, without *feeling herself humbled to the very dust. . . .*" And so on.

But, if to withdraw from an engagement is such dire disgrace, what may be anticipated, under the best conditions of love and prosperity, by going through with the business ? " What are you expecting ? " Mrs. Ellis asks the trembling bride. " To be always flattered ? Depend upon it, if your faults were never brought to light before, they will be so now. Are you expecting to be always indulged ? Depend upon it, if your temper was never tried before it will be so now. Are you expecting to be always admired ? Depend upon it, if you were never humble and insignificant before, you will have to be so now. Yes, you had better make up your mind at once to be uninteresting as long as you live, to all " (she clutches desperately at a fleeting hope) " except the companion of your home; and well will it be," she says with recovered firmness, " well will it be for you if you can be interesting to him. You had better settle it in your calculations that you will have to be crossed oftener than the day ; and the part of wisdom will dictate, that if you persist in your determination to be married you shall not only be satisfied, but cheerful to have these things so." She goes on to tell you that when a woman has brought down " every rebellious thought to subservience and "—I am still quoting Mrs. Ellis—" an earnest and prayerful determination entered into, to be but a secondary

being in the great business of conducting the general affairs of social life " (even of social life, you observe), " there are a few things yet to be thought of before the final step," etc.

One of these final things is Mrs. Ellis's warning to the girl never to breathe a word to her lover about the addresses of any other suitor. Let him think he is the only man she ever became really aware of, otherwise, Mrs. Ellis says, your confidences " will be remembered against you at some future time when," she adds in her cheerful way, " each day will be sufficiently darkened by its own passing clouds." The bride, she observes on page 12, is to note that it is of the utmost importance not to offend her husband's relatives by any appearance of contradiction or self-will. " He and his friends will be better judges than you can be," says Mrs. Ellis. The woman is called upon not only to regard herself as a novice, but " in taking upon herself the honourable title of wife, to sit in humility and self-abasement in the lowest seat." That is textual, though how the " honour " and the " lowest seat " are compatible in the Ellis mind, I will leave to you.

" In being unobtrusive, quiet, impartially polite to all and willing to bend to circumstances, consists the great virtue of the bride; and though to sink into an apparent nonentity may be a little humbling to one who has perhaps occupied a distinguished place among her former friends, the prudent woman will be abundantly repaid."

You have Mrs. Ellis's word for it.

But will you believe me when I say that in Chap-

ter III, on "The Characteristics of Men," before our author deals with "spots on the sun" (as she bids us to consider the shortcomings of men), she tells us that in the character of "the truly good man there is a power and a sublimity so nearly approaching what we believe to be the nature and capacity of angels, no language can describe the degree of admiration and respect that the contemplation of such a character must excite. To be permitted," she goes on (and here we see the happiness of the family circle being actively promoted!), "to be permitted to dwell within the influence of such a man, must be a privilege of the highest order: to listen to his conversation must be a perpetual feast; but to be permitted into his heart, to share his counsels, and to be the chosen companion of his joys and sorrows!" —Mrs. Ellis is here breathless with ecstasy, and merely flings down a point of exclamation. But after adding a dash she winds up—"it is difficult to say whether humility or gratitude should preponderate in the feelings of the woman thus distinguished and thus blessed."

Now, how are you to treat this paragon once you have secured him? "It is little use," says Mrs. Ellis, "that you esteem and reverence your husband in the secret of your heart, if you do not by your manners, both at home and abroad, evince the proper deference and regard. At home it is but fitting that the master of the house should be considered as entitled to the choice of every personal indulgence, unless indisposition or suffering on the part of the wife render such indulgences more properly her due; but

even then they ought to be received as a favour, rather than claimed as a right."

Much space is devoted to consideration of how a woman by the simple device of seldom saying anything at all, may keep the affections of her husband. It requires much tact, as well as delicacy, we are told, to know how to render even expressions of endearment appropriate and consequently acceptable. But Mrs. Ellis is reassured by remembering that "not the highest intellectual attainments" united to the noblest gifts of nature, "will be able to efface for a moment the delicate perceptions of a truly sensitive woman, or to render her in the deep and fervent love of which she is capable, otherwise than humble and easily subdued; especially when she comes with child-like simplicity to consult the dial of her husband's love, and to read there the progress of the advancing or receding shadows, which indicate her only true position through the lapse of every hour."

There is a wonderful passage, which I have not time to quote, about the occasional laying aside of his dignity, on the part of what Whistler used to call "the Bow-Wow British Husband." "For the wife," says Mrs. Ellis, "it might be a dangerous experiment, even in her fondest and most unguarded moments, to make any allusion to scenes and circumstances of this description: especially to presume upon having necessarily assumed, at such times, the stronger and more important part. When her husband *chooses to be dignified again* and is capable of maintaining that dignity, she must adapt herself to the happy change and fall back into comparative insignificance."

We could take leave of Mrs. Ellis and her like more gaily were it not for the attitude she seems to share in common with other of these old advisers on the subject of the unfaithful husband. "There is nothing," she says, "but uncomplaining loneliness and utter self-abasement for the wife who cannot keep her husband's heart. It is in this spirit alone that with any propriety, or any hope, she can appeal to a husband's feelings . . . casting herself upon his pity as one struck down by a beloved hand will kiss the instrument of her abasement. . . ."

Is it not clear that this sort of attitude on the part of women who were influential accounts for much?

Some of us who have not the excuse of speaking for the public of sixty years ago—some of us have upon our souls sins not so different, after all, from those of Mrs. Ellis. I am here not so much to bewail those sins as to inquire how shall we wipe them out?

To register a vow never voluntarily to contribute more to ignoble notions of women—that is not enough. You, especially you Suffragists who are young, are not content with that, and you should not be. We have too much leeway to make up. The mere withholding of the Vote means too much of daily injustice to the industrial army; too much of constant danger to the economic safety and therefore to the moral safety of all women.

It is not enough to recognise these facts privately. It is not enough to admit them publicly without fear of criticism and without hope of applause. I say this not unmindful of the obstacles in many a would-be helper's way. My point is that our difficulties, more

than anything else, should open our eyes—should educate us, and finally should nerve us to sweep those difficulties out of the world.

Women of the type of the majority here to-night (women from whom so much is rightly expected) find themselves in a world where things—the big effectual things—are done by men. If a woman is to accomplish some piece of work "out in the world," as it is called—the achievement must usually come about by means of the grace of men. It is they who hold all the influential posts. They have nearly all the money. When it is a question even of money nominally belonging to a woman, she is often not free to use it as she thinks best.

Hearing, just lately, of cases illustrating this last point, I have been reminded of the impression made upon me as a child by my mother's telling me of the trouble she had in persuading her trustee to allow her to manumit her slaves. She found herself in the same position in which certain of our friends find themselves to-day with regard to helping the Suffrage treasury. Their husbands, brothers, guardians, "do not see the necessity." The Kentucky trustee of long ago saw in slaves only property; and in his ward he saw only a romantic young woman whose foolishness must be kept down with a firm hand. But the romantic young woman saved enough out of her pin-money to buy the liberty of one of her slaves each year. That, however, was not the part of the story that interested me any more than it will you. The significant part of it was the sum the slave-owner had to save up before she could set free a

certain favourite negress. All concern in the transaction was merged for me in sheer envy of that black woman who, in the open market, was worth such a lot of money. Should I ever be worth a thousand dollars to anybody ? It was unthinkable.

This is the sort of soul-searching that no little male-child in a comfortable home ever knows at its highest poignancy. The boy has no misgiving as to his value. The man has still less. It is not only that, through their superior opportunities, men are those who make the large fortunes—to speak of "value" of the most obvious kind. Where there are great sums to bequeath, with you in England, they go not to the daughter who is debarred from making large sums for herself. They go to the son, for whom all doors swing wide.

The effect of the law of primogeniture is not merely to mass all the great fortunes in the hands of men. The principle set up by that law hypnotises even the people who have no estates and no far-descended titles to pass on. It coerces the imagination of the million into fixing its hopes, and spending such money as it can scrape together, on the son. He may be an idler. It doesn't matter. He may be semi-idiotic. It is all one. The daughter may, with scant encouragement, arrive at what excellence you will—as long as there are any sons about—or even nephews or cousins, the lion's share, as the saying presages, will go to the male.

If the woman insists on practising some art or profession, if, against all odds, she achieves distinction—no official honour for her. Not one of the great

worldly prizes will ever come her way.[1] Not through character, not through gifts, not through service—only through the gate of Wifehood is any woman allowed to come to honour.

With regard to those glittering baubles—baronies, peerages, laureateships, and the like (which I am credibly informed men eagerly compete for)—woman's position reminds me of a fire that took place in Atlantic City, while I was over on the other side. A little boy and girl coming home from school found their house in flames. The two children and a girl-neighbour, all under eight years of age, went "pluckily," as the dispatch records, into the burning house "to bring out the two-year-old Blanche, who was asleep in her go-cart in the kitchen. Neighbours came, as the children dragged the scorched go-cart with its burden out of the room, which was already on fire. 'Sammy is going to be a fireman when he grows up,' said his sister, 'so Mary and me went in to help him get the baby out. . . .'"

It is an old story for a woman to "go through fire" with a man. She may bring out the baby, but it is the man who brings out the medal.

With regard to the opportunity of service given by money, I am not forgetting that, hampered as women are, they are said to keep the great charities alive. It is largely a case of many a little making a mickle. It is also true that some of you are almoners,

[1] I am glad to be reminded there is an exception to this rule. In the short space of time during which one great international honour has been open to both sexes, twice the Nobel Prize has been won by women.

and have the handling of large sums which your husbands place at your disposal. But, suggest to these gentlemen that instead of giving to charities for the next year, you will give to the Suffrage Movement ?—and see how free you are to choose what Cause you will help ! Your restricted liberty, even here, is one of the reasons that some women (agreeing with us in their hearts) make no sign. They wear all the marks of wealth, but they have nothing really their own.

Since my return from the other side of the world one of my most curious experiences has been to see some old acquaintance at one of the Suffrage meetings, and to say with an impulse of pleasure : " Oh ! I never thought I should find you here ! " " Why not ? " my interlocutor has answered, a little injured ; " I was a Suffragist long before you were." I could only murmur that I had never suspected it, and wonder in my heart if anybody else ever had !

But even in the case of women openly with us and of independent means, a common excuse for not doing something for the Cause is that same honourable-sounding one of " Charities." I am reminded in this connection of an American working girl who was sent to ask a certain rich woman, of well-known liberality, to help the funds of a Trade Union to which the girl belonged. The lady offered no objection to the principle of Trade Unionism, and she listened to the story of the work this particular body was doing, kindly enough—but to all appeals for help returned the one answer, that she " had her charities "—her

Working Girls' Clubs, her Friendly and Rescue Societies, and the rest—till at last the girl, heart-sick at her failure, burst out with: "Don't you see what we are trying to do is to get rid of the *need* of your charity?" "But no!" the working girl said, in telling about the interview, "there's lots like her. They've got the charity-habit. *It is the stuff that sends 'em to sleep!*"

Now there is another sort of "stuff" that sends women to sleep. Remembering it brings me to the remaining reason which I suggest as one of the three that bar our more rapid progress. The other narcotic is provided by the illusion entertained about the lady whom the world labels "Exceptional."

She is sometimes tolerably well informed. She, unlike the mass of her sex, often has independent means. She usually can make people listen to her. Why has she not done more to further this reform? For nobody pretends that it was left for our own age to produce now and then a woman who could think straight and speak without fear. Long before most of us here were born, a woman-friend of Emerson and member of the Brook Farm group, was writing against "the habit of talking about woman's Sphere, as if it really were at present, for the majority, one of protection and the gentle offices of home. The rhetorical gentlemen and silken dames who, quite forgetting their washerwomen, their seamstresses, and the poor hirelings for the sensual pleasure of Man, that jostle them daily in the streets—talk as if woman need be fitted for no other chance than that of growing like cherished flowers in the garden of domestic love."

Even earlier, your Mrs. Jamieson was writing about what she calls "the anomalous condition of woman," pointing out "as a primary source of incalculable mischief the contradiction between woman's supposed and her real position; between what is called her proper sphere and what has become her real sphere by the laws of necessity."

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, what came of all this brave nineteenth-century talk that has to our ears such a twentieth-century ring? Why did not these women accomplish more? Why have they left so much for you to do? I will remind you why; for our most significant lesson lies in the answer to that question.

In the days when these women thought and wrote, the secret of combination was not known. These excellent people failed to further the Cause they advocated, because they tried to do alone what can only be accomplished if we work together.

Hitherto, public opinion has been man's opinion. It has consistently begged the question of the fitness of women in general to advise in public affairs. And it has done this by dint of labelling "exceptional" those women whose capacity could not be denied.

As I have said, the worst of it was that woman herself was induced to accept that summing up of the matter. The flattery implied in the assurance that she was unique, clouded her judgment of the rest of her sex. It checked her generosity. It turned to a barren self-conceit what would have been fertile seed if cast upon the common fields.

I have come to the conclusion that the reason the

Exceptional Woman is one of our chief obstacles is because *she is a Drug in the Market!* I can scarcely find one of my sex whom someone has not been ready to persuade of her Exceptionalness!

A year or so ago I was present during a conversation between a lady and a gentleman, in which, by way of good-humouredly belabouring me, some laughing reference was made to Woman Suffrage. The lady promptly disavowed all sympathy with that Cause, but justified her own conspicuous activities by admitting there were certain public duties which men could not adequately perform without women's aid. She instanced the supervision of the great hospitals. She told how, years ago, being appointed among the officers of one of your large institutions, she asked for an explanation of a certain considerable item of expense. Nobody could furnish any details, and her brethren on the Board were not inclined to go into the matter. That item had always been there. No one had ever questioned it before. But the newcomer on the Board was not abashed. Upon persisting in her search for knowledge, she was referred from one authority to another till finally she confronted the Matron. The Matron was haughty, and said the sum had gone in "the usual necessaries." She had, of course, kept an account of them? "Oh, of course." Then would the Matron produce her account? "No." It was something that no *man* in nineteen years had ventured to ask of her.

In less than nineteen days a dishonest Matron was removed, and serious leakage of public money was stopped.

The gentleman who listened to this recital gave it as his opinion that there were few women who could keep their own accounts, let alone detect misappropriation of Public Funds. But, he added, with his most gracious smile, it was no news to him that the lady who had succeeded in doing this was an Exceptional Woman. "You must not think," he admonished her, "that many women are as able as you."

As I have said, the phrase is one which every woman can hear at some time from somebody—but in the pleased complacence with which the great lady in question accepted the narrowing down of a principle into an assertion of her own superiority, I seemed to see why she did not believe in Woman Suffrage. To be able to believe in the value of the Suffrage you must be able to believe in other people. You must neither think too much of yourself, nor too meanly of the rest of the world.

Whether it be our New England Margaret Fuller "declining" (in the words of her brother and biographer) "to join any organised body"; "refusing," as he says elsewhere, "to merge her individuality"; or whether it be that great spirit, George Eliot, or Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, preaching subservience to others and herself practising the largest liberty—each one fancied herself not in her gift alone, but in her fundamental needs, to be an Exceptional Woman. The love of liberty which these notable ladies shared in common, their passionate insistence upon it for themselves, each took for the head and front of her Exceptionalness. They seemed to think

with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, that so far men were right. Liberty probably *would* be bad for other women. To "the Exceptional" it was so dear, so indispensable, they would pay any price society exacted even for the maimed and doubtful makeshift that they won.

What I want to emphasise is that because these brilliant women insisted on Freedom *only for themselves*, they lost it even for themselves. For liberty seems to be a plant that needs the air. It will not grow in confinement. It really looks as though you could not keep Freedom alive unless it is free—to everybody.

Those who were "great ladies" by the accident of birth, or the chance of marriage; those who were successful artists, able to command a hearing—practically all who had some measure of liberty, seem to have lived in the fog of this old illusion.

They were "Exceptions," not merely in opportunity or in gifts, but in the essentials which lie behind these things.

Yet in any project of reform, the most richly endowed woman in the world can count for little more, outside her own door, than a voice crying in the wilderness, unless the charge of her "Exceptionalness" is proved unfounded through the response she wins from others like-minded with herself. Like-minded, as aforesaid, in essentials.

Happily, women are learning, at last, what men had to learn before they could achieve their freedom —the fact that surface differences in one's fellows do not necessarily make for disaccord.

It is one of the by-products of the new processes of thought that women are less disposed in these days to over-estimate their individual value.

Speaking only of the province of Art and Letters, wherein women have longest been able to compete—if no single fame emerges to-day as notable as that of certain figures towering out of the past, intelligent women know that the sum of feminine achievement is for the first time a factor in that *Welt politik* which is the shaping of public opinion.

We see clearly that, working shoulder to shoulder as we have never worked before, women are laying the foundations of a power which is to change the course of history.

TIME TABLE

March–June, 1908

With the retirement of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and the accession to leadership of Mr. Asquith, the Women's Cause lost a weak friend and gained a determined enemy.

The next outstanding event after the change in Premiership was the campaign of a prospective Cabinet Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, seeking re-election for North-West Manchester. His indeterminate attitude on the woman question brought against him the full weight of the W.S.P.U. electioneering organisation. Remarkable as it was even at that date, many persons, then as later, were ready to assign any and every reason for a Liberal candidate's defeat except the reason frequently contributory, sometimes decisive. Mr. Churchill's successful opponent, Mr. Joynson-Hicks, in publicly thanking his electors, said: "I acknowledge the assistance I have received from those ladies sometimes laughed at, but who, I think, will in future be feared by Mr. Churchill—the Suffragists."

A "safe" seat was, of course, ultimately found for the Government nominee, but this second by-election, for the purpose of enabling Mr. Churchill to join the Cabinet, presented his women opponents with an excellent opportunity for conducting an educational campaign in a new field.

Whether instructed by the events in North-West Manchester, Mr. Churchill was prepared to be a little more precise and encouraging in his pronouncements at

Dundee. The Suffragettes were "hornets," but, all the same, "No one," he declared, "can be blind to the fact that, at the next General Election, Woman Suffrage will be a real practical issue; and the next Parliament, I think, ought to see the gratification of the women's claims."

But all efforts failed to draw from Mr. Churchill some definite undertaking to forward the Cause, whose justice he now admitted.

Mr. Asquith had refused to "give time" for Mr. Stanger's Bill. But owing, some thought, to the action of a body of dissatisfied Liberal women, he said later (speaking of the need to abolish Plural Voting, and other electoral anomalies) that, though he would not give Woman Suffrage a place in the contemplated Reform Bill, he would not oppose a woman's amendment, *if* framed on democratic lines; *if* accorded the strong and undoubted support of the women of the country as well as of the electorate; and *if* such amendment were approved by the House of Commons. Thus the Prime Minister put up barrier after barrier—demanding prospectively of women of all political creeds that their sharing in the elementary right of civilised citizenship should advantage one party—Mr. Asquith's own. He, moreover, demanded proof that, in spite of that fundamentally unfair proviso, *all* the country should care so much more about women's having that elementary right than about any party advantage, that the country as a whole (unlike the Prime Minister) would agree with one voice that women should accept these one-sided terms rather than wait for any that might be fairer.

Even supposing this miracle of public unanimity could be wrought, Mr. Asquith still had countless ways of quietly influencing the Cabinet-ridden Commons. No one could know better than the Prime Minister what were the obstacles in the way of a concentration of forces in favour of a far-reaching reform known to be repugnant to the head of the party in power.

But those were days when women knew less about "the wheels within wheels" of politics. The Liberal women and the Constitutional Suffragists of all parties imagined that Mr. Asquith had made a valuable concession.

Even the Militants took up that part of the challenge which by implication denied the general and "democratic" character of the demand. They knew that at the time of the agitation among politicians to extend the vote to the agricultural labourer, opponents of that proposed extension said with truth what no one could say of the women's agitation: that there was no demand amongst the section to be franchised. The answer of the great Liberals of the past had been that the fact of the agricultural labourers not demanding the vote was a proof the more of their need to exercise it and so to learn its value.

But to the "weaker sex" the heavier task.

It was gallantly undertaken.

On June 21st an impressive historical and symbolical pageant, organised by the National Union of Suffrage Societies, marched through crowded, cheering streets from the Embankment to the Albert Hall. Under the chairmanship of the President, Mrs. Fawcett, a mass meeting was held of such size and enthusiasm as men of long political experience declared had seldom been equalled.

A week later came the monster demonstration in Hyde Park, under the auspices of the Women's Social and Political Union.

"The Times" said of it:

"Its organisers had counted on an audience of 250,000. That expectation was certainly fulfilled, and probably it was doubled, and it would be difficult to contradict anyone who asserted that it was trebled. Like the distances and numbers of the stars, the facts were beyond the threshold of perception."

The "Standard" said:

"From first to last, it was a great meeting, daringly conceived, splendidly stage-managed, and successfully carried out. Hyde Park has probably never seen a greater crowd of people."

The "Daily News" said:

"There is no combination of words which will convey an adequate idea of the immensity of the crowd around the platforms."

The "Daily Express":

"The Women Suffragists provided London yesterday with one of the most wonderful and astonishing sights that have ever been seen since the days of Boadicea. . . . It is probable that so many people never before stood in one square mass anywhere in England. Men who saw the great Gladstone meeting years ago said that, compared with yesterday's multitude, it was as nothing."

The "Daily Chronicle" said:

"Never, on the admission of the most experienced observers, has so vast a throng gathered in London to witness an outlay of political force."

V

THE MEANING OF IT

An Impression of the great Hyde Park Suffrage Demonstration, published in the "Daily Mail," June, 1908

MANY an ardent Suffragist could have found in her heart to-day the wish that the populace of London had chosen to take a more temperate interest in the Cause.

The moment of entering the Park was a thing to remember. Thousands of banners were shining in the sunlight of a perfect afternoon, and punctuating in rectangles of green and violet the lines of the seven armies, entering each by a different gate, to the music of thirty bands.

Good-humoured as the vast crowd showed itself, those who could escape from it were envied, even though escape meant mounting by strange and exiguous steps that somewhat dizzy elevation which served as a Conning Tower.

From this highest point of vantage in the Park one looked abroad and caught the breath. People! People! People! as far as the leaf-fringed boundaries of the Park. Men climbed up to stand an instant beside us, to stare abroad and to estimate the number of people in the Park at a quarter of a million, or fifty thousand in excess of that number. For the

most part these transient visitors would gape with wonder, murmuring there had never been so many people gathered together before in any peaceful demonstration, since history began, and then still staring give way to others and drop back into that sea of folk below.

The noise was momentarily hushed when the bugles gave the signal for the speaking to begin. The megaphones roared "Now!"—upon which in twenty places a woman's figure rose up above the sea of heads and began to address the people.

I left the Conning Tower and made my way from one to another of the platforms, forging a path through the tight-packed mass with infinite difficulty, and not without invoking the aid now of a beneficent policeman, now of some friendly stranger.

According to the plan, when the bugles sounded a second time, the speaking was brought to a close, and at a final signal the great concerted cry went up: "VOTES FOR WOMEN!"

Caps went up, too, and the air was full of the fluttering of handkerchiefs and the noise of thousands of voices shouting. The sound is in my ears still, but, strangely enough, with no human accent. The Conning Tower was like some wave-beaten rock, and the roar that rose from its base was like the sound the sea makes rushing at full tide into reverberating caverns.

It has been a day of sunshine, of thunderous cheering, of music, of colour, and of immense goodwill. But what has it done for the women's cause?

Tens of thousands all over the country will be

asking to-morrow: What has been achieved by the greatest demonstration of this nature ever made?

When the total expenditure has been added up—all the physical and moral energy that went into those two monster Suffrage Demonstrations of the past week—not a woman who took part in them but will ask: What does it all come to?

If it "comes to" realisation on the part of the Powers that Be that women's demand for the vote is widespread enough and earnest enough to merit their getting it, then the labour will not have been in vain.

But if it does not do just that, then the labour *will* have been in vain.

What men may not generally realise is that many of the women who appeared in this demonstration, and in that of last week, did so only at the call of the highest sentiment of loyalty. There were those who marched in spite of thinking a parade through the streets a childish way of having to record opinion—there were those who carried banners feeling in every nerve repugnance to the publicity they courted.

Nothing but a passionate caring for the issue could have brought these women into line. Small consolation to them (and hardly more to the lighter-hearted Suffragists) that tens of thousands of people have cheered themselves hoarse in the Park, and that the greatest city in the world has twice within eight days been treated to a stirring, an unprecedented spectacle.

What does it all come to?

TIME TABLE

JUNE–SEPTEMBER, 1908

PROCESSIONS, mass meetings, and vast open-air demonstrations, the labour of an army of people given gratis for the Cause during the many weeks of preparation; "Resolutions" in favour of Woman Suffrage carried by thousands wherever proposed, had no more effect upon a Liberal Government demanding signs of "democratic support" than had the deputation of textile-workers, or other labouring women, asking for the safeguard of the vote.

But Mr. Asquith had laid such emphasis on the democratic note—that it was sounded yet again. After another rallying of the W.S.P.U. forces at Caxton Hall, and after a deputation was again sent out, and again repulsed at the Strangers' Entrance to the House of Commons, a Mass Meeting was called in Parliament Square. According to the estimate of the Press 100,000 people responded. The Government sent 5000 police to cope with this "democratic" gathering, and to prevent any of these inconveniently democratic women from either reaching the People's House, or from addressing the democracy about its doors.

Education of the people being what it is, there was inevitably amongst so great a throng a number of roughs ready to take from the police the cue that women who publicly demanded the vote were outlaws and fair game. Who can wonder that some of the neglected and the vicious, seeing the very guardians of law and order

harrying the women, should have construed this as permission to do the same, or worse. There were wild scenes that night in Parliament Square—watched by three Cabinet Ministers and other well-known public men standing in Palace Yard safe out of the mêlée.

The women kept up the struggle till close on midnight. Those Suffragists who were arrested were given from one to three months' imprisonment.

While a number of these women were still in Holloway came three fresh by-elections.

An emergency call went out from the W.S.P.U. headquarters for more speakers. I happened to be staying in a country-house in the North of England at the time of the opening of the Newcastle contest. There was the usual house-party argument and the usual condemnation of militant tactics. One of the guests handed me a paper folded to display some "scare head," which I do not now remember, but which conveyed the idea: "*How Newcastle disposes of the wild women.*"

The article described an attack made on members of the Women's Social and Political Union who had dared to hold a meeting in a rough quarter of Newcastle near the docks. It was bad reading. I wondered how much of it was true. I wondered so much that the following morning I went to find out. On my arrival at Newcastle I discovered that, as usual, the scene had been exaggerated, partly, I suppose, through the desire to make a good, blood-curdling story that should sell the paper, and partly from that motive we have become accustomed to see at work—a desire to frighten off other women from going near the places and the persons associated with these hideous scenes.

Nevertheless, I heard Mrs. Pankhurst, soon after my arrival, telling a young helper that she was not to take the Dock Meeting that night (as the girl was expecting to do), but was to go with another detachment and speak in a different and, as I gathered, less disorderly quarter of the town. Mrs. Pankhurst herself took over

the meeting at the danger-point—the scene of the disturbance I had read about.

I would not for a great deal have missed the enlightenment of that evening. Instead of listening to drawing-room misrepresentation of the Suffrage scenes, I found myself standing with Mrs. Pankhurst and her helpers on a lorry while one after another those indomitable women addressed the crowd that surged about us. If she were not herself speaking, Mrs. Pankhurst would interrupt whenever the situation was most threatening. I shall be very old before I can forget the slight figure on the cart confronting the turbulent mass in that ill-lit, unsavoury place, the face ghostly in the dimness, but the incomparable voice ringing out clear over the thousand heads, trying to rouse in that host of the neglected and unfit (who yet were in many cases voters) a sense of decency, of justice, of civic responsibility.

I can feel now after four years the sense of the hopelessness of her task, as I heard the cries about us, smelt the stench of rotten eggs and, as the speaker turned in the gloom to answer some verbal attack, I hear the sickening splash of something moist and foul as it struck the white face lifted above that moral darkness. The quiet gesture with which she wiped the stain away and let her pocket-handkerchief fall, not resenting, hardly seeming to notice the insult, never stopping an instant in her attempt to enlighten these people, appealing still to whatever of good their poor share in civilisation had left alive.

And then I saw the miracle happen. Someone cried "Shame!" and moment by moment the temper of the crowd changed. The meeting ended in the throng's pressing closer round the lorry, not to overturn it, and not now to attack the little group of women. Those who pressed nearer with outstretched hands held up pennies. "Paper, Miss—got a paper?" We sold them all the copies we had brought.

I have more to tell in a later paper of Suffragette

dealings with that working-class "democracy" for which the Prime Minister has so great a regard. But the so-called "educated" were not neglected. Many women of the middle and upper classes were still afraid to brave the widely advertised dangers of street gatherings. For them a meeting was arranged at the Town Hall.

VI

AT NEWCASTLE TOWN HALL

Mrs. Taylor and Fellow-Women,

I have been thinking that probably no great reform has ever been advocated by so many good, and admittedly unanswerable arguments, as this of Woman's Suffrage. You may, if you like, hear it urged with logic, and with eloquence, in six or seven different parts of this city, any day from now till the election is decided.

You have heard, and will presently hear, more of these arguments presented afresh from this platform. Anyone who cannot go to meetings may have access to a large body of literature on the subject, from Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill down to Mrs. Pankhurst's latest pamphlet.

Because of the wealth of material of this nature constantly accessible to you, I will confine my remarks to two other aspects of this many-sided matter. One of them I will present by way of encouragement to those who share our faith. The other I submit to those who have not yet joined us.

Let us imagine that some one of you has come here to-day with a prejudice against this movement. If there is such a person present I am ready to applaud her for taking a step in the right direction. She

could not do a better thing than listen to the speeches which will follow. But listening is not all. The mental attitude counts for much. Since I am hoping that anyone who arrived here unconvinced will go out of this hall a believer in, and a worker for, the franchise, I would offer this fact as a help to her conversion. Almost every social or political betterment that we rejoice in to-day was opposed, and bitterly opposed, by the timid or the slavish in the days gone by. I will not remind you of the more notorious instances. They will be in the recollection of everyone who knows anything about the past—though I do sometimes think that those persons who are so filled with apprehension at the prospect of the triumph of this reform, must either never have read, or must have forgotten all they ever knew about History. What I want to emphasise is that there is almost *no* gain but has seemed loss to the majority, before it was accepted. Once accepted, nobody remembers long that anyone was ever so benighted as to oppose the thing proved good.

Take, for instance, two institutions which are commonplaces of your civilisation. The first has to do with the financial credit of England at home and abroad. We all admit that in the present state of human society anything that affects public confidence in the fiscal soundness of the country is of importance. But we find a difficulty in putting ourselves in the place of those who opposed the founding of the Bank of England. Imagine regarding the Bank of England as a "shady concern"

—the device of faddists and crack-brained believers in the Newfangled! But even the Bank of England did not escape being ranked with "the dangerous new things"—things that should not be tolerated. Why should this pillar of English finance have been so distrusted, so hotly opposed? Because previous to 1694 the people of this country had done without it.

I will give you one more significant example of the fear of the new thing because it is new.

Those of us who think of the civilisation of the English-speaking race as old—feel something incongruous in the reminder that so short a time as a hundred and ten years ago a law was passed making the circulating library illegal. In these days the man who puts books within easy reach of the people is called a benefactor. A little over a hundred years ago he not only would not have been considered a benefactor, he would have been disgraced and heavily fined. I say disgraced advisedly. Any person who in the year 1799 made a practice of lending or hiring out newspapers or pamphlets or books, was legally held to be on a par with the keeper of a disorderly house.

Surely a fact like this ought to give pause to those who are afraid to open the door of the mind to a new blessing merely because it is new.

Now to those who are ready to welcome Women's Enfranchisement I will say a few last words before I sit down.

An ever-growing number of people have begun to see clearly that there never was before, in

all the course of history, such a chance for the wisdom of our half the world to manifest itself as is given to women to-day. Join in this movement, give it your special gift, whatever that gift may be —give it your time and your influence (everybody has some), give it pounds or give it pennies, or give it defence—do your share with the sure knowledge that you are not only doing, but receiving, good.

The situation is enormously interesting. Before the coming of these wonderful days women had to do their work (even the most gifted and the bravest women)—had to work, not only heavily handicapped, but without any hope of making the battle a whit easier for others. A woman might—if she had great abilities and great luck—she might make an individual success. But she did so with the disheartening knowledge that her most shining achievement left the great mass of women and therefore of men—left the *world*—very little better off, in spite of all her individual striving—in spite of all her individual success. What she achieved did not really *count* in the long run. By so much as she distinguished herself she was thought of as an exception, a "sport," as the men of science say. But the women who are working for high ends to-day—whether in Finland in the Parliament, whether in Germany in the Universities, whether in the streets of Constantinople, in the Women's Trade Unions of America, or at the English by-elections—women to-day may work gladly and with uplifted hearts. For they find themselves (especially I say this to the younger women), you

find yourselves in the field at a great moment in the world's history. Your good fortune it is to be offered a glorious piece of work at a time when what you do is *going to count.*

Whether you read history or whether you read only the newspapers, you will see that the times are ripe for a new and a nobler standard of the value of woman's work. I do not really need to say that this applies as much to the woman whose chief work is minding her home and bringing up her children, bringing them up to believe in the equal dignity of the sexes. It applies to her just as much as it applies to those who are employed in more public service.

Before to-day, if a woman succeeded even in shaping her existence to high and noble ends, she could never be sure that the germs of self-respect and independence that she might implant in her daughter, would survive the hard and bitter conditions which there was always the possibility the daughter would encounter when she should leave her mother's side. But remember that we have with us, now, a power greater than all the Cabinet put together—greater than that of all the Governments of all the nations of the earth. We have the Tendency of the Time on our side. It's a very tremendous thing, this Tendency of the Time. The individual, even the strongest, may be a straw in the current. But we fortunate ones find ourselves living in the days when the stream of tendency is at last turning our way. We have the sure and comfortable knowledge that what the Suffragist preaches to-day will very presently be accepted by the whole world.

I cannot myself imagine anything more glorious in the way of human destiny than to be a woman living in these times—a woman able to take active part in this great work. There will always be plenty for women to do—but never again, one may think, will the lot fall to woman of seeing herself so needed.

A very moving thought is this one of the high significance of women's actions and women's words in these months that lie before us. Stop a moment to realise the situation. Women who have so long been called weak and helpless, who have so often *been* weak and helpless, they need be that no longer —unless they are so downtrodden and so spiritless that they prefer being weak and helpless to being strong and being of value.

Until the New Suffrage Movement made such a statement possible and true, never before could anyone with a sense of responsibility stand up and say to an audience of all sorts and conditions: There isn't a woman here who may not have her share in the honour of *counting for something* in the politics of her country. The fact that anyone may say that to you to-day is (to my thinking) a thing that will stand to the eternal credit of the Founders of this Union. They have discovered ways—with a genius and a fertility beyond praise—they have discovered ways in which *every* woman may share in the honour of bringing about the most momentous reform that the world has seen.

TIME TABLE

SEPTEMBER, 1908—MARCH, 1909

IN anticipation of the opening of Parliament on October 12th, 1908, an effort was again made to induce the Prime Minister to promise " facilities " for enabling the House of Commons to proceed with the Women's Bill.

The Prime Minister refused to give any such promise.

For the fifth time a so-called " Parliament of Women " was announced to meet at Caxton Hall. The business was to be the framing of a Resolution which a volunteer deputation was to take to the Prime Minister—or as near to him as he would allow. Everyone knew by now that a Suffrage Deputation (having the avowed design of bringing home to the Government a sense of the urgency of the matter that was being neglected) would find its progress opposed by the police. Everyone knew that after much ill-treatment the more determined members of the deputation would be arrested. But though the deputation might fail to bring their Resolution before the Prime Minister, they would have brought it before the general public. They would have compelled the attention of the authorities, if only by making them advertise and emphasise the growing discontent, through their employment of thousands of police to keep women away from a House of Commons which did not represent them.

Upon one point in the contest the Prime Minister had expressed a reasonable view. The question of Woman Suffrage, according to him, was one which concerned the great body of the public. He has the women with him

there. Furthermore, they had seen his Cabinet refusing to treat the matter seriously. They had seen a supine Commons entangled in red tape. Since, therefore, no individual and no official group both could and would attend to a matter vitally concerning the public, there was no choice between letting the issue drop or letting the public lend a hand in dealing with it. The public was invited to lend a hand.

A leaflet, sown broadcast, invited the people of London to come to Westminster and help the Suffragettes to "rush the House of Commons."

As a result of the issuance of this highly "democratic" invitation for the evening of October 13th, a summons, on October 12th, was served upon Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Drummond, and Miss Christabel Pankhurst, "in consideration of conduct likely to provoke a breach of the peace."

A few days before, a Labour Member of Parliament, at a mass meeting of unemployed men, publicly advised them to "rush" the bakers' shops and help themselves. At a moment of industrial wretchedness and unrest, men (who have better ways of ventilating grievances and securing special legislation) were instigated by one who was not only a voter but a legislator, to loot the premises of tradespeople, and to foment riots in an effort to stir the sluggishness of authority. Yet to do this was held to be less reprehensible than to invite the people to rush to the People's House (where all these matters are debated and decided) on an errand which, although supremely urgent, Parliament had held under consideration for forty years. Or, by a more ironic construction put upon the invitation, the public was asked to help the Suffragettes to rush (i.e. to induce something like speed in) that cumbrous body which had yielded to the lethargy of party thraldom.

Just as to "rush" the bakers' shops meant an attempt to secure quickly a needed share of the staple of bakers' shops—bread (for lack of which a little group of people

were suffering), so to rush the House of Commons plainly meant an attempt to secure quickly a still more needed share of those staples of Parliament: Representation and Special Legislation, for lack of which millions of people had suffered too long, too patiently.

The poor little bakers' shops would have been defenceless against the onslaught of hunger-maddened men. The House which the handbill invited the people to "rush" was known to be guarded as if for a siege.

A throng of unarmed citizens (even had they desired, and they did not so desire) could do no possible harm to the august body sitting in the Commons. But the man in the street, and the woman, could by their presence within Parliamentary precincts, and by their temper, give a sign of their interest in the Women's Cause. What other Cause, by a simple handbill, however framed, could have filled Parliament Square with so many thousands? We hear no answer to that question from a Government which has called, again and again, for proof of public interest in the women's claim. Can those Liberals who vaunt their faith in the democracy, and who make flattering appeals to it—can they mean they care about the people's view *only* when those views are expressed at the polls? Then, indeed, were the crowds in Parliament Square on October 18th not "the people," and instead of the fair words they are accustomed to at the polls, deserved the hustling the police gave them.

On that evening while the three leaders lay in the cells of the Bow Street police-court awaiting trial, a deputation, led by Miss Wallace-Dunlop, left Caxton Hall and pressed through the crowds in the direction of the Houses of Parliament. The police broke the ranks of the deputation, and those persons impossible to turn back, or put out of action, were arrested.

When news of this result reached Caxton Hall, a second deputation, three times as large, set forth on the same errand. The struggle between the women and the police went on till midnight, with the usual tale of

arrests. But except for the disorder created by the police obstruction of the deputation, the vast crowd that had responded to the Suffragists' invitation was quiet and well-behaved.

During the trial of the Suffragist leaders for issuing the "rush" handbill, attention was drawn to the impunity with which the Labour member, Mr. Will Thorne, had incited the hunger-stricken unemployed to "rush" bakers' shops. A summons was thereupon tardily issued against Mr. Thorne, merely, as he himself said, because of Miss Pankhurst's use (in the course of the trial) of this latest instance of the man's being allowed to steal the horse while women were punished for looking over the wall.

The Labour M.P. slipped out of his little difficulty by giving bond to be of good behaviour. The Suffragettes gave no bond to alter their behaviour, and accepted full responsibility for their action. The case became the talk of the town. It was such a ventilation of women's political grievances as had never yet been obtained. Miss Pankhurst succeeded in putting two Cabinet Ministers into the witness-box. The astonishing skill and resourcefulness with which she conducted the examination of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, and the then Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, gave many people their first measure of her power. But those who had been watching her for the previous two years had already recognised in that original and dauntless mind, stored and disciplined beyond its years, the force which should shape the course of modern history. To say so much will seem like extravagance to persons standing aside from the Woman's Movement. In the words of the Prime Minister: "Wait and see."

Miss Pankhurst, her mother, Mrs. Drummond, and many of the members of the deputations of October 13th, were sent to prison.

The months that followed brought the trial and imprisonment of Mrs. Baines, and of many others, for their

share in interrupting the meetings of Cabinet Ministers and for other "demonstrations." One of these, made in the House of Commons by members of the Freedom League, resulted in a temporary taking down of the obnoxious grille from the Ladies' Gallery, and a further addition to the number of Suffragists in Holloway Gaol.

Still more went to prison from the Albert Hall meeting arranged by the Women's Liberal Federation. The disturbing element here was supplied by Mr. Lloyd George, with his unlucky promise of "a message from the Government." For he had none of any moment to deliver. The more practical women in the audience were the more angry at the affront to their intelligence. Pointed questions were hurled at the Minister, whose only answer was acquiescence in the hurling out of the hall of the questioners. The scene was a very horrible one, and fatally damaging to many a woman's hope of what Mr. Lloyd George might do for the suffrage. The Liberal organ, the "Manchester Guardian," admitted that the ejections from the meeting were effected with a brutality wellnigh "nauseating." The "Standard" said some of the worst acts of unnecessary violence took place within ten yards of the chairman's table, and therefore under the eyes of Mr. Lloyd George. The "Globe" said: "We see very genuine grounds for the impatience displayed by Suffragettes at the Albert Hall. Mr. Lloyd George must have known that the declaration he had to make would have infuriated any body of men."

The evil example condoned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer began to be followed at meetings throughout the country. The police appeared in force to protect Cabinet Ministers at their meetings. But at the meetings of "the weaker sex" there was seldom any—and never adequate—protection granted to women from those who tried to break up the gathering, to burn offensive-smelling chemicals, to let loose rats and mice, and to assault the speakers.

The assembling of Parliament for the first time in 1909

still brought no mention of women's claims in the Speech from the Throne.

A seventh "Women's Parliament" met in Caxton Hall on February 24th, and saw a deputation go out (headed by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence) to battle a little way towards the Houses of Parliament, and in the end to join their companions in Holloway Gaol.

An eighth "Women's Parliament" was held at the end of March, and a deputation, headed by Mrs. Saul Soloman, widow of the late Governor-General for South Africa, set out for the Strangers' Entrance to the House of Commons, only to find, as their predecessors had, that it led those "strangers" who were Suffragettes to a London prison.

VII

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Printed in two parts in "Votes for Women," March, 1909

> *"But he answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the heaven is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven; but ye cannot discern the signs of the times."*

AMONG the signs that might instruct the politically weather-wise is the last election news from Denmark. The first occasion upon which women were eligible as candidates, seven have been elected to the Copenhagen Municipal Council.

Norway granted three-fifths of her women the full Parliamentary franchise two years ago, and the plan works so well that the Royal Council has recommended that the remaining two-fifths of the voteless women should also be given equal citizenship rights.

In Italian politics the most significant fact, chosen out of all others for telegraphing to "The Times"—which, of all papers, can least be supposed to welcome such news—is the prominence given to Woman Suffrage at the General Election last week in Rome.

In regard to those parts of America longest settled and supposedly most enlightened, we were informed a few short months ago, the Woman Suffrage Cause had been killed. But the latest advices (through the non-partisan Press of Boston) tell how two thousand Suffragists stormed the State House during the legislative hearing of the Julia Ward Howe Bill. That staid and most conservative of New England papers, the "Boston Transcript," called the occasion "the biggest Woman Suffrage demonstration which Boston has ever seen." The "American" said: "Never had such a scene been witnessed on Beacon Hill." The daily papers devoted columns to description and comment; and persons who succeeded in gaining the much-coveted admission to the hearing, report the same sort of change in the latter-day treatment of the question that has been remarked in the House of Commons. In the Boston State House, too, the same opposer who for years has made his speech the occasion for ventilating a cheap facetiousness, spoke last month for the first time with gravity and decorum. The late proceedings are admitted on every side by the American Press to mark a notable advance for the Cause in the Eastern States.

And what of England! Just as truly as the body sitting at St. Stephen's is accounted the Mother of Parliaments—just so truly may the Woman Suffrage agitation in this country be called the Mother of the world-wide New Movement. The late-born corporate spirit among women (taking its hundred different aspects according to character and opportunity)—this new inspiration lifting up the women

East and West—had its birth in England. To England the peoples look for its highest expression. One witness to the truth of this came in the significant utterance of a Norwegian the other day: "We did not want to see our women going through what the English women have gone through. We knew that, with the English example before the Norwegian women, they would do the same. Rather than see that we enfranchised our women."

Not only from afar off may the Signs of the Times be read. Look down the columns of our paper, at the notices of meetings to be held and of those which have taken place within the week, but do not forget that the reported meetings represent less than a tenth of those that are held. British Suffrage Unions and Societies of every political complexion spread like a network over the kingdom, and next month will see the International Woman's Suffrage Alliance holding its Convention in London.

One of the most significant of the isolated "Signs" was the profession of faith recently offered to the Prime Minister by the women doctors. Out of the total number of qualified medical women in Great Britain, but fifteen did not join in asking for the vote! When one thinks of what those five to six hundred women stand for—of trained skill and exceptional knowledge of life amongst all sorts and conditions—this "Sign" alone might, one feels, have helped the least weather-wise among the authorities to a rational forecast.

But, looming high above all the other Signs, standing out like "a great sea mark," is the fact

that something like 400 women have gone to prison in their determination to make as clear as voteless people can that they will not patiently endure their present outlawry. While you read these words more than thirty women of character and standing are living the life of the second-class prisoner in Holloway Gaol. And this has come about through the endeavour of those women to help the authorities to interpret, and to take to heart, the most significant of all the Signs of the Times. But those who, seeing "*a cloud rise out of the west, straightway say, There cometh a shower*," are not able, it would seem, to discern the meaning, or gauge the elemental force, that lies behind this cloud of witnesses.

So little weather-wise are the political prophets they even think that prison as a means of protest has been weakened by repetition and robbed of its significance.

But going to prison has not lost its poignant significance to those who suffer the ordeal, nor to those who do not blind themselves to what that ordeal involves.

There are people who think the Suffragette is pleased to "advertise" her hardships, and that she gets her reward out of "posing as a martyr." But the truth is, there are few things rarer than to find a Suffrage ex-prisoner exhibiting any readiness to dwell upon what she has suffered. I have sometimes felt that the comfortable people, who "take it out" in criticising, are not so much to blame. Perhaps they ought to be given a better opportunity to realise what imprisonment means. But,

no; your Suffragette is both too proud and too busy. Also, she is terribly afraid of seeing the Suffrage Movement side-tracked on to prison reform. "No," she says; "keep to the point"—in spite of semi-asphyxiation, disgusting food, the aching misery of plank beds, damp cement, midsummer days of choking airlessness and winter nights of graveyard chill—"keep to the point! The point is Votes."

Well, I shall disobey the unwritten Suffragette law and say a few words about this same prison ordeal which I have not gone through myself, and which I yet know something about.

Perhaps one reason that I feel I may speak of it is that I have not endured it in my own person.

When you see the women coming out of Holloway to the welcome of flags and the music of bands—some of you, even if you do not grossly misjudge the Suffragettes, find difficulty in realising what these prisoners with the smiling faces have lived through. "Why," people say to one another, "this going to prison can't be anything like what we thought it was! If it were half as bad as we imagined, nobody would ever try it twice! Some of these women have been oftener still! Going to prison is played out!"

Why is it, then, that in spite of misapprehension on the part of many of the great middle class, in spite of the contemptuous shoulder-shrugging of the authorities—why is it that every time women go to prison to forward this reform, they actually and very palpably *do* forward it? And the answer to that question brings us face to face with a problem which confronts all leaders of reform.

We must remember that one of the most difficult things in the world is to induce the preoccupied public to stop and reconsider the merits of an opinion they have begun by regarding with prejudice. The primary concern of the practical reformer is: How shall people be made to give this matter a fair hearing? All the comparatively easy ways are tried first. Women's appeal was in the beginning made to reason. You know the result. In America the result was epitomised a few weeks ago by President Roosevelt's saying he was lukewarm about the Suffrage because women were lukewarm. In England politicians say they were warmly in favour till women became so hot. On this side the Atlantic feminine fervour cools the generous ardour of the legislator. On the other side it is the absence of warmth in the Suffragist that left the President cold. I do not think it is American partiality that makes me imagine Mr. Roosevelt shows himself a better weather-prophet than the authorities here. Whatever we may think about his statesmanship or his love of abstract justice, we must admit he reads aright the *Signs of the Times*. The American Government will find less inconvenience result from withholding the Suffrage from women than will the Government of England. You have not in all the world at the present moment a better apologist for W.S.P.U. tactics than Mr. Roosevelt. Here at home your political weather-prophets are like those who, when they "see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway say, There cometh a shower"; and so it is. And when the south wind blows they say, "There will be heat; and it cometh to pass."

But as in the old days, those who "can discern the face of the sky and of the earth" cannot discern "the signs of the times."

In the symbol offered them by the woman who goes to prison, the political weather-prophet can discern no meaning.

"We were a little stirred as well as shocked at first," people tell you. "But we are no longer stirred, and hardly even shocked."

And because they are able to deaden what human sympathy they have—because they can look on unmoved while women suffer—the public, too, they think, is equally indifferent.

But they are wrong. The public is anything but indifferent.

And this is why.

To the toiling millions prison is *real.*

In the great body of the electorate there are people who realise that going to prison is a ghastly business.

Justice is the stepmother of the poor. The poor know the heaviness of her hand. Few great aggregations of the populace where there is not someone who has been caught in our clumsy municipal machinery—someone who has suffered and been torn. Those who have not first-hand knowledge *have heard.* Prison for them is not a thing to shrug the shoulders at; neither lurid legend nor queer anachronism, scarce credible as an accompaniment of twentieth-century progress.

Prison is *real* to the poor. In the person of some relation or friend it has been a horrible fact. No

danger of their sharing the illusion of the middle-class woman, entrenched in her comfortable ignorance, leaning back against her cushions and saying: "Holloway can't be so bad, or the Suffragettes could never get so many people to go there." Strange forgetfulness of the fortitude possible to the human soul!

Say to your neighbour at a dinner-party, "Those women seem rather to like it." But don't dare say that to the people at the polls. There will be those who know better.

Men and women who would understand the signs of the times must remember that the comfortable person's paraded indifference to women's imprisonment is offset by the enormously greater number who are not blind to the significance of hundreds of women voluntarily entering the gates of Holloway.

Anyone who doubts this has only to watch the electric effect of the coming of a relay of newly released prisoners into the field during a by-election. Easy enough to denounce their appearance as "a cheap electioneering dodge." If it were really so "cheap," if it were not in truth very costly, it would not have its invariable effect upon the voters. The reason it is so potent is, as I say, that in the great mixed crowds that gather round the public speakers at election time are always these *people who know*. Even for them—at no time used to much creature comfort—even for them, hardened to harsh treatment and sordid environment, some of them (enough to make actual the women's sacrifice) *know* the fierce pinch of prison days. The effect of that sacrifice

upon the masses is enormous. It is incalculable. They look at these delicate women and say, "She knows!" Very few of the gentlefolk know. That woman standing there in the wind and the rain, *she* knows! She was under no compulsion to share the heavy knowledge of the hard-pressed. She must be buoyed up by some strange power unknown to the petty offender.

What power? Let us listen and find out.

By going to prison the Suffragette has done two things. She has proved her faith to those who know the harsher side of life; and she has brought herself through suffering into more direct relation with the masses than she could have done by all the academic eloquence in the world.

The perhaps too common silence of the Suffragette as to the price she has paid does not here make for misunderstanding. These people have seen the cowed and beaten look many a prisoner has brought out of the same sort of experience; they know all about the strain on the nerves and the courage, the unconquerable sickness at sight of the food, the windows that cannot admit air. In their dumb way some of these people, too, have felt the atmosphere, not to be shut out, that penetrates the prison walls. The *Geist der stets verneint* is in possession there. The spirit that denies all hope of understanding or of betterment, that harshly represses every natural human emotion.

Who that heard will ever forget the tone and haunted look of that prisoner who once admitted the acid-like corrosion wrought upon the mind by

the " warder-voice." And she excused the warders— " Not their fault," she said, " that the only people who may speak to you have a *special* voice for prisoners. A voice that isn't human," she said, with trembling lips, " a voice of iron." Such kindness as, in spite of all, creeps into the relation must be hidden like a felony. Some of us remembered the Suffrage prisoners when we read the other day that Sir Walter Scott once quoted an opinion that women go mad seldomer than men. " I fancy," he said, " if this be true, it is in some degree owing to the little manual works in which they are constantly employed, which regulate in some degree the current of ideas, as the pendulum of the timepiece. I do not know if this is sense or nonsense; but I am sensible that if I were in solitary confinement without either the power of taking exercise or employing myself in study, six months would make me a madman or an idiot."

When he came over to lecture for the Berlitz School a few weeks ago M. Richepin told us how the poet Verlaine, after trying to kill his friend by shooting him, was sent to prison for two years. But Verlaine was given all the books he asked for. In those two years he taught himself English. He read Shakespeare, so the lecturer said, from end to end before he had finished his term. What would not some of the imprisoned Suffragettes give for a chance to occupy their minds to that extent? But they, so far from having injured their friends, have not even tried to injure their enemies. Yet they are less well treated than a French citizen convicted of manslaughter.

"Ye say . . . in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the sky is red and lowering."

Does it tell men nothing that some of the Suffrage prisoners before they tried going to Holloway had grown grey working among the poor and the lost? And some of the prisoners are young—full of a generous fire as illuminating as experience, lighting up the Wrong that could never touch them, but which they have pledged themselves to banish out of the world. A few weeks of prison! Can you not realise that the woman bearing that may see in herself a type of the Immemorial Woman—the burden-bearer of the world?

Prison? What evil there can visit her that will not pale by the side of evil women bear outside those walls?

One seems to hear the prisoner in her darkest hour reproach her heart as the Greek hero did: "Endure, my heart, far worse hast thou endured."

She comes out smiling, do you say? Yes. Her smiling is a symbol of her faith. But you may believe that, as she sits alone there in her narrow cell,

> . . . "tears
> Are in her eyes; and in her ears
> The murmur of a thousand years."

I do not ask on behalf of those women what they do not ask for themselves. They do not ask for sympathy. They went to prison for "a sign." The question is: Can you read it? Can you even discern the two strange and unexpected things that have come out of women's going to prison in the cause of Suffrage?

First: a fact not easily given its due weight—the fact that through their suffering and voluntary acceptance of the badge of humiliation, they have come close to the poor. Second: most difficult, most precious gain of all, the poor have come close to them.

In a democratic country this is a circumstance of the first magnitude. Well may the most astute statesman be given pause when he reflects that there is no body of educated men in Europe to-day in such close touch with the hard-pressed, disinherited millions as the women who have gone to prison for the Vote.

TIME TABLE

March–May, 1909

As will have already appeared, this commentary concerns itself, chiefly, with the fortunes of the Society best known to me—the W.S.P.U. I would not for a moment wish to minimise the work of the others—least of all the old-established National Union of Suffrage Societies, of which Mrs. Henry Fawcett, LL.D., is the President. This important organisation, during the time I write of, multiplied its branches and secured a following whose steady, unhasting, unresting educational work, especially in conservative quarters, was building up a power destined presently to astonish the unbeliever.

. The new spirit which had been breathed into the existing bodies was of a nature so vigorous and independent that it has kept on seeking and finding newer channels, as well as brimming the old.

In addition to the Freedom League there was presently to be a Conservative and Unionist League, a Church League, a London Graduates' Union, a London Society for Woman Suffrage, a Tax Resistance League, an Artists' Suffrage League, a Political Reform League, a Cymric Suffrage Union, a Scottish League, an Irish W.S.S., the Fabian Group of Women, the Free Church League, a Catholic W.S.S., a New Constitutional Society, the Men's League for Women's Suffrage, the Men's Political Union, the Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage, the Men's Committee for Justice to Women, the Suffrage Atelier, the Actresses' League, the Women Writers' League, and I know not how many dozens more.

The last-named was formed in 1908 by Miss Cicely Hamilton and Miss Bessie Hatton. Its constitution was drawn up by Miss Hamilton early in 1909. The following is a copy of the leaflet sent out to announce the scope and function of the Society.

WOMEN WRITERS' SUFFRAGE LEAGUE

President: Miss Elizabeth Robins.

Chairman of Committee: Miss Cicely Hamilton.

Hon. Treasurer: Miss Ethel Hill.

Hon. Secretary: Miss Bessie Hatton, at the Office of the League, 55 Berners Street, Oxford Street, W.

Telephone: 1808 City.

The object of the Women Writers' Suffrage League is to obtain the Parliamentary Franchise for women on the same terms as it is, or may be, granted to men.

Its methods are the methods proper to writers—the use of the pen.

It is entirely independent of any other suffrage society; at the same time it was formed with the intention of assisting every other suffrage society by the methods proper to writers.

The qualification for membership is the publication or production of a book, article, story, poem, or play for which the author has received payment, and a subscription of 2s. 6d. to be paid annually, financial year ending December.

Women Writers are urged to join the League. A body of writers working for a common object cannot fail to influence public opinion.

Publications dealing with the enfranchisement of women are issued from time to time, and it is hoped that members will ensure ventilation of the subject in such

ways as are open to them—by writing articles, taking part in newspaper correspondence, etc.

Amongst the members of the League are—Olive Schreiner, Alice Meynell, May Sinclair, Sarah Grand, Beatrice Harraden, Violet Hunt, Mrs. Israel Zangwill, Mrs. Havelock Ellis, Evelyn Sharp, Gertrude Warden, George Paston, Madeline Lucette Ryley, etc.

Subscriptions and communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary.

[The W.W.S.L. has held, besides its Annual General Meeting in each year, At Homes and other public entertainments, at most of which speeches were made and literature sold of a propagandist nature.

At the Waldorf Hotel Reception, May 4th, 1909, the speakers were: the President, in the Chair; Mrs. Philip Snowden, Miss Evelyn Sharp, Mrs. Nevinson, Miss Cicely Hamilton, Mr. Zangwill, Mr. Pett Ridge. Hostesses: Mrs. Cohen, Madame Sarah Grand, Miss Beatrice Harraden.]

VIII

TO THE WOMEN WRITERS' SUFFRAGE LEAGUE

Speech at the Waldorf Hotel, May 4, 1909

. . . We do not forget that, long before John Stuart Mill wrote about the Subjection of Women, a woman, and a woman of genius, called upon the thinking world to revise its views as to women's relation to civilised society.

Personally, I have never found it easy to divide our human benefits into those coming from men and those coming from women. But the frequent disposition to make this distinction is only part of a general tendency which Suffragists are concerned to see arrested. My own adhesion to the Suffrage Cause was given largely because I saw that only through political equality may we hope to see established a true understanding and a happier relationship between the sexes.

Changes in the constitution of society, changes lying too deep to be touched on here in the brief time at my disposal, have long been tending towards increased separation between men and women, in practically all the interests of life save one. In the world of industry, of business, of thought—even in what is called society, the growing tendency has

been to divide the world into two separate camps. Men who are "doing things," or want to do things, have less and less time to give to an order of beings having no share and, as it came to seem, no stake in the varied aspects—save one—of the great game of life.

Briefly then, the conditions of modern life were more and more separating the sexes. Instead of still further dividing us, Women's Suffrage is in reality the bridge across the chasm.

As a League of Women Writers in sympathy with this new bond between men and women we may, I think, take a legitimate pride in remembering the origin of the first clear and effectual enunciation of woman's claim to stand beside her brother in the world's work.

We find a peculiar fitness in the fact that the first ordered and reasoned vindication of woman should have been put forth by a woman. If hers was not the first book on the subject, it was the first to affect the thought of the time. And it was the one destined, by its originality and its vigour, to survive the winnowing of a hundred years. Of course, I speak of the work of Mary Wollstonecraft.

I venture to think that no mightier seed has been sown in the world's garden.

If, in all the years since its planting, no writing of so profound a political significance has come from the hand of woman as Mary Wollstonecraft's "Vindication," certainly the spirit that inspired that brave book is alive to-day under a myriad guises. Even if that spirit had not recently found expression in so many ways, and in writings so diverse as Miss Cicely

Hamilton's "Marriage as a Trade," and Mrs. Sidney Webb's share in the Minority Report on the Poor Law Commission—we must have known that one of the most important, most indispensable services to Social Reform would have to be undertaken by the Writers.

The magnificent platform work being done from various centres must be supplemented and farther spread about the world through the medium of the written word. I don't mean merely by frankly propagandist writing (though I am the last to deny the importance of that), but even more valuable is, I think, the spirit of fairness and of nobler thinking about women, a spirit which both men and women writers are able in a thousand ways to illustrate and justify.

It is the business (the business as well as the high privilege) of men and women writers to correct the false ideas about women which many writers of the past have fostered.

We are sometimes reminded that though there have been Women of Letters for centuries, they have done comparatively little to deserve a place beside Men of Letters, and still less to win a place beside the Philosophers.

But we remember, too, the sort of encouragement that has always been meted out to the *femmes savantes* of the past. We remember the treatment accorded to Mary Wollstonecraft, to Susan B. Anthony, and, in a mitigated degree, to their followers down to this hour. We cannot pretend to feel surprised if the mass of women have hitherto ven-

tured to taste of publicity, as they say the hounds on the Nile bank drink at the river—*running, to avoid the crocodile.*

But not to go too deeply into the question of the value or the volume of woman's literary work—if we admit (as of course we do) that the great mass of the world's literature is of man's making, women may, by so much, hold themselves more innocent than men of popularising certain errors about feminine nature.

Now, Suggestion is a mighty force. It is perhaps mightier even than has yet been demonstrated by Modern Science. How much, we ask, how much of woman's past and even her present futility is due to writers constantly dinning it into her ears that for purposes of all activity, save one sort, she is a poor creature and, in comparison with her brother, is as moonlight unto sunlight and as water unto wine? [1]

Even the noble-minded Wordsworth could say apologetically of love:

> "*Though* his seat be feeble woman's breast."

You remember, too, Wordsworth's idea of the way in which the returned spirit of the Greek warrior would address his well-loved wife?

> "*Thou, strong in love, art all too weak in reason, in self-government too slow.*"

Then we have the verdict of the modern poet, using prose for once that he may be quite clear. Speaking of the old culture he says that it was "like a good

[1] Milton was an arch-culprit in this degradation of the idea of womanhood, a fact emphasised in Miss M. W. Thompson's pamphlet "Adam and Eve."

woman." Ah! a good woman. That sounds hopeful. What is the Good Woman like in the estimation of Mr. Modern Poet? You read on and find that a Good Woman "*gives all for love.*" We have noticed a great unanimity about that. It is the condition always named first, as the prime essential in the good woman. "She gives all for love, and" (the poet continues a little anxiously) "*is never jealous.*" That is also important. But listen to the climax. She gives all for love, she is never jealous, and "*is ready to do all the talking . . .* !" That surprises you. Woman is not accustomed to being invited so cordially to do even a share of the talking. But the poet is quick to guard against our misunderstanding his urbanity. The good woman is ready, he says, to do all the talking "*when we are tired.*"

The ineffable majesty of that "We" is a thing to remember. But we shall forget it. We are rich in pearls of this sort.

Nothing would be easier than to multiply these quotations, but we prefer to say straightforwardly that we want men to help us not only to win the vote, but to redress the balance of Suggestion. Women realise that they have wasted a great deal of precious time in trying to be as weak as was expected. We have long been told that the cleverest woman is she who successfully conceals her cleverness. I am bound to admit that many of us have succeeded to a charm in that enterprise. But I protest that a great deal of our success was the result of the power of Suggestion. More than one generation was taught that the truly feminine

way of meeting any crisis was to fall in a graceful faint. As a womanly accomplishment, swooning long ranked with dancing and wool-work. It survives (that accommodating desire to be as feeble as man may require) in the readiness with which a girl will subdue her physical strength, and allow herself to be helped (even by the most casual and indifferent acquaintance) to mount a stile, or to cross a brook, tasks which the able-bodied young woman is as competent to undertake as is the man at her side. Not the most inveterate romanticist among us has the smallest fear that when the young woman no longer conceals her ability to ford the brook alone—that her cavalier will find no means of showing his manly resourcefulness and his devotion.

For the rest, we need to be told not how weak we are, but how strong we are. And I do not think that even in that we differ so much from men.

But we shall hear.

TIME TABLE

MAY–JULY, 1909

EARLY in the summer of 1909 Mrs. Pankhurst again addressed the Prime Minister by letter. She told him that a Ninth Parliament of Women would meet on June 29th, that a resolution would be framed, and that it would be taken to him by a deputation which would wait on him at the House of Commons at eight o'clock that same evening. Mrs. Pankhurst added that the deputation could accept no compromise, and must insist upon their constitutional right to be received. The Prime Minister returned the usual formal refusal.

But for the resourcefulness of the W.S.P.U. leaders, the issue of this deputation would have differed in no way from that of the many others. The leaders were wise enough to see that the best immediate change that could be looked for, with any confidence, would be the removal from police-court jurisdiction of the cases arising out of arrest.

The political motive behind these demonstrations would stand a far better chance of ventilation and comprehension if tried by jury.

The legalised number of persons composing the previous deputations had deliberately been exceeded, in the hope that the offenders might, as was threatened, be charged under a Statute of Charles II, which limited the number of petitioners to twelve. But the need, in applying this law, to carry suffrage cases, out of comparative obscurity, into the strong light of the higher court, no doubt pre-

vented the revival of the ancient method of dealing with inconvenient demands.

There remained for votcless persons The Bill of Rights.

This concession of the time of William and Mary enunciated the right of the subject to petition the King. As the King, by the custom of our time, abstains from intervention in political affairs, petitions upon any such ground are addressed to the head of the party in power. To the Prime Minister, then, as representing the King, petitioners must submit their grievances. If the petitioners are men, they may find difficulty in securing redress, but no body of people finds difficulty in securing a hearing—with the exception of women who desire Citizen Rights.

A week before the meeting of the Ninth Women's Parliament Miss Wallace-Dunlop stencilled on the wall of St. Stephen's Hall :

WOMEN'S DEPUTATION

JUNE 29

BILL OF RIGHTS

"It is the right of the Subject to petition the King, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal."

Miss Dunlop was escorted out of the Hall by the police before she could make sure the impression was clear. For a second attempt to remind Parliament that the ancient liberties of the English people could not be violated with impunity, Miss Dunlop was arrested, and tried on the charge of wilfully and maliciously damaging the stonework of the House of Commons. She was convicted, and on refusal to pay a fine she was sent to prison.

Miss Dunlop was in Holloway when the meeting so significantly advertised took place.

The deputation which left Caxton Hall on the 29th of

June was headed by Mrs. Pankhurst, Miss Neligan (a lady aged seventy-six, who had been headmistress of a girls' school), and six others.

After scenes of violence and disorder, having their sole origin in the police opposition to the advance of the little band, Mrs. Pankhurst and her companions were arrested. The indignation of their friends and followers found new expression that night.

As the horde of mounted police forced back the crowds that filled Parliament Square, a number of Suffragettes produced small stones round which petitions were wrapped, and choosing the lower windows on the ground floor of Government offices, dark and deserted at that hour, the stones with their messages were sent through the Government glass. A hundred and eight women were arrested. Ninety-four pleaded the right of the subject to petition. Their cases were suspended until " a point of law " had been examined in the High Court. The Lord Chief Justice ruled that the right to petition undoubtedly existed. He proceeded to prove the foolishness of which the laws not infrequently give evidence, by adding that the King's representative was not obliged to receive the petition.

It was like saying to the starving : Here is bread, but whoever eats shall be punished.

Pending inquiry into the validity of the ancient Bill of Rights, the woman who had printed it on the walls of the House of Commons was shut up in Holloway, under such a sentence as is commonly passed on pickpockets and disorderly drunkards : one month in the Third Division. This was not the first time Miss Wallace-Dunlop had gone to prison in the cause of women's political liberty. But apparently she had now made up her mind that the same treatment as is given to political prisoners when those prisoners are men should be given to political prisoners when they are women. The point was admirably taken. If a woman was able to compel acknowledgment of her political rights in His Majesty's

prisons, the continued denial of her political rights outside would be shown in its essential absurdity.

Furthermore, in the remaining time during which women are denied political recognition in the world outside, they might (as Miss Wallace-Dunlop was the first to prove) either secure that recognition in prison or secure their release. To do this was to strike shrewdly at authority. But at a cost so great to the prisoner that no one believed it could be borne, least of all by a delicate woman.

Nevertheless, Miss Dunlop secured her release from prison, and all but release from life, by ruthless use of the Hunger Strike.

The effectiveness of this terrible weapon was recognised at once.

The authorities supposed that in Miss Dunlop they had an example of such iron resolution as would not come their way again.

The day that saw her discharge saw fourteen other Suffragettes sent to the same prison. Every one of them demanded political treatment. Failing it, every one of them adopted the Hunger Strike.

The device was new, and little understood by the public.

People who had never missed two consecutive meals in their lives joked and laughed at the idea of adding the slow torture of starvation to the other miseries of prison life. People who became savage if the fourth meal in the day were ten minutes late were perfectly certain the women wouldn't hold out.

IX

THE HUNGER STRIKE

Letter published in "The Westminster Gazette," July 21, 1909

SIR,

Without going into the question of the lawfulness or the unlawfulness of the actions of the militant Suffragettes (about which even the Doctors of the Law appear to disagree), I would like, as dispassionately as possible, to draw attention to a factor in the case not yet touched upon, not even recognised.

I would first of all remind you that, for several years, women have endured for their political opinion's sake such treatment as is meted out to drunkards and to thieves. Suffragettes have endured this for a cause which has been before the country for forty years, a cause to which 420 members of the present Parliament have given their adhesion, a cause of which a majority of the present Cabinet are in favour. Now, if the traditional avenue through which voteless citizens can carry a grievance (the orderly petitioning of the King's representative)—if that be barred, what are voteless citizens to do?

If they are men, their practice has been either to make the general public suffer for its apathy (by burning down buildings and by indiscriminate

bloodshed), or else they have made their opponents suffer in person.

The women's way has all along been to take the brunt of the suffering upon themselves.

It is this difference which has blinded many men to the force that lies behind the woman's movement. It has led responsible officials to jeer at a "policy of pinpricks," and to speak with pride of the way in which men forced the door "at which the ladies are scratching."

The time has come when any available light should be shed upon this darkness, especially as a new phase has been entered upon by the fourteen members of the W.S.P.U., who feel that enough Suffragettes have undergone punishment in the Second and Third Divisions. These latest prisoners are trying in their own persons to ensure that the indignities they suffer shall be the last inflicted upon the women of this country on account of political agitation.

My sympathies are somewhat engaged for the luckless persons to whom falls the no doubt repellent task of attempting to carry out the police magistrates' sentence upon the women who "for a sign" broke windows in Government offices on that evening when the thirteenth deputation was forcibly turned away from the door of St. Stephen's. The wisdom that stepped in earlier to extricate the prison authorities from a single dilemma (in the case of Miss Wallace-Dunlop) may desert them when they are asked to apply it to fourteen.

I find that no one thing so divides the world as

the opinion as to how much may be expected from self-interest. To discover that certain people are ready to lay down what most regard as of paramount importance, that is perplexing enough. Though the story of human fortitude is older than any history that is written in any book, the fortitude that will go any length still wears to the average mortal an air so strange that it runs the risk of not being recognised. Now, Sir, my point is that these women know that. They undertake their "hunger strike" realising that it will be supposed they will not go so far with it as to do themselves mortal injury. They know the supposition will be that they are trying merely to frighten authority, and that they will prudently stop this side of a course that will bring them a release for which neither the Home Secretary's order, nor that of the King, will be needed.

There are, without doubt, persons so angered against the Suffragettes as to say, "Very well; let them expiate their foolishness with their lives."

But that will not be the public view of the matter. Nor will it be the (intended) policy of the Government. It therefore seems necessary to say that in dealing with these women it will not do to count upon the usual canons of self-interest. There are those (whether among the Suffragettes now in Holloway or the thousands outside)—there are those prepared to pay any price that may be exacted for protesting against more women being made to suffer the indignities of the Second or Third Division —for what? For following to its logical conclusion an opinion they share with the majority of the

legislators of this country. The prisoners know quite well how it may end for any one of them. The people who are not fully informed are those whom the country will hold responsible for the issue. And that seems to me not fair. There should be no avoidable misunderstanding as to the spirit (however reprehensible) in which the "Hunger Strike" is undertaken. The women are laying hands upon a very terrible weapon, but there is no ground for hoping that, if they let it fall, others will not take the weapon up. That this should be so may be fanaticism. But it is also hard fact. Calling it names, good or bad, will not alter it.

I know it is said that if the authorities do not deal stringently with these cases general disorder will ensue in England; and everyone hereafter who has a grievance will think he has only to break a few windows and gather a crowd in Westminster to get his will. But that is childishness. "Anyone" with a grievance hereafter who can get thousands of reputable people to espouse his cause, hundreds to go to prison for it, and the general public to give him fifty thousand pounds a year to spend on it, will have reason to be listened to. No cause is fed so fat on air.

But my aim, Sir, in addressing you, is to prevent anyone's having a right, when one of these women succumbs in Holloway Gaol, to call the occurrence "death by misadventure." It will be no accident. But for the Government it would be a misadventure which even their opponents would gladly see them spared, if one of these women (with

the memory of the smiling Members of Parliament out for "fun," to see how women meet the nerve-shattering horror of a contest with mounted police)—if, with that memory to nerve her, one of these prisoners forces the gates of Holloway and sets out upon the Great Adventure which even heroes evade as long as they may with honour.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

ELIZABETH ROBINS.

HENFIELD, SUSSEX, *July* 21, 1909.

TIME TABLE

JULY 22—DECEMBER 8, 1909

WHEN the authorities realised that to keep the Hunger Strikers longer in prison would be to kill them, they were released.

Self-starvation is known to induce sickness of several kinds. So great is the suffering entailed that strong men shrink from facing it. I have been told that seamen sometimes attempt the Hunger Strike as a protest against brutal treatment. My naval authority added that he could not remember hearing of a man who had held out longer than three days. There are Suffragettes who have starved for nearly twice as long, and then not given in till the prison gates were opened.

We hear people saying that militant Suffragists are culpably impatient. Such critics ought, in justice to their own intelligence, to review the facts of this struggle. Few who do so will be able to deny that the Militants have shown an almost unbelievable patience in accepting, year in year out, without reprisal, the pains and penalties inflicted for those earlier, milder forms of militancy.

In addition to the ceaseless quieter, less horribly costly work of propaganda, the Militants, ever since the summer of 1909, have gone to Ministers' meetings, and have asked that the responsible men of the country should promise to attend to this pressing side of the public business—the side concerned with the status of women. Ever since 1909 women who dared to express publicly their sense of the urgency of this matter, have

been set upon by men, gagged, beaten, and worse—and then sent to prison.

This is not a matter of opinion, but a matter of history.

In prison these women, often passing through experiences calculated to unsettle reason, have consistently adhered to the grim terms of self-starvation till, on the brink of death, the authorities have set them free. Through injuries received at Cabinet Ministers' meetings (as in the cases of Nurse Pitfield and of Miss Henria Williams), or through the effects of the Hunger Strike (as in the case of Mrs. Pankhurst's sister, Mrs. Clarke), women have died shortly after their release.

If persons who have not followed these events, or who have forgotten them, wish to know something of the patience with which this grim sacrifice has been carried through, they should consult the last three years' files of "Votes for Women." They will find there names and details, as well as every means of instituting the most rigid examination. Those who think they have not time for that may learn much from a couple of chapters (XXI and XXII) in Miss Sylvia Pankhurst's valuable record, "The Suffragette."

The authorities found out three years ago that there was no end to the number of women ready to *payer de leurs personnes* (as the proverb has it), the "costs" which a Liberal Government levied upon those who were unwilling to wait indefinitely for the enfranchisement of their sex. The problem which confronted the prison authorities was: how to punish people who were undaunted by solitary confinement, by the rigours of the "punishment cell," by strait-jackets, frog-marching, and other forms of personal indignity—people ready, in addition to all this, to calmly starve themselves to death.

That the undermining of the penal system might be arrested, a new deterrent was introduced into the prison treatment of women in September, 1909. An order went forth that prisoners who would not eat were no longer to

be released when starvation threatened to set them free. They were to be forcibly fed.

According to an array of medical authorities, this process, even when employed upon an unresisting patient, is painful and dangerous. When fought against it becomes a mode of torture. It can be persisted in only at the cost of reason or of life.

The medical profession behaved well in bringing these facts to the notice of Parliament and of the public. A memorial was sent to the Prime Minister. Letters of protest bearing names eminent in the world of science appeared in the Press.

To their lifelong shame some doctors were found ready to be the tools of the Government in carrying out this abominable expedient. The question of Forcible Feeding was ignorantly debated in the House of Commons to an accompaniment of laughter. But outside were medical men who cared for the honour of their profession. They denounced publicly the use of a member of a humane calling to execute physical punishment upon defenceless prisoners, overpowered, gagged, bound—for to that depth is the prison doctor degraded who inflicts this suffering.

Moreover, those medical men who protested are proved, at the cost of many a woman's agony, to be in the right. The brutal device does achieve its unavowed end. It tortures political prisoners. It does not achieve its avowed end. Its avowed end is to maintain life. But, as medical men had warned the authorities, people who fight against forcible feeding are not nourished and cannot be kept alive and sane. These prisoners for conscience' sake, girls and white-haired women, are merely tortured to the verge of the grave, and then turned out wrecks of their former selves. I have seen a girl go into prison young, blooming, looking twenty years old. I have seen her after her experience of forcible feeding. Not directly after, either, but at the end of some weeks of nursing back to life. And in broad day I did not recognise her.

I thought in the bent figure and drawn face I was looking at someone of middle age who was a prematurely old woman.

Many of us, who followed the history of the opposition to Woman Suffrage, learned that what goes by the name of callousness, or cruelty, is often defective intelligence, a weakness in the faculty of realising things only heard about, not seen. The mass of people (and we among them) simply cannot make real to ourselves the sufferings of other people unless those other people are our friends or relations. Several of the women who have had most to do with militancy are free from this limitation.

One of them is Lady Constance Lytton. Her power of intense realisation of the burdens other women are carrying compelled her to bear a share. She had already been to prison for the Cause when, in October, 1909, her sympathy with a working woman then being tortured in a Birmingham gaol, led Lady Constance to take her place among those determined to make a protest. The occasion chosen was the next public appearance of a Member of the Government. To such a pass had domestic politics come that Cabinet Ministers dared no longer to invite the general public to listen to official speeches about public affairs. Admission was by ticket, and no woman was eligible. But Suffragettes were fertile in devices by which they brought their business before officials who neglected it. So the " protection of Cabinet Ministers " became a growing charge upon the public purse. When Mr. Lloyd George went to Newcastle, in October, 1909, to talk about Liberal policy, he was obliged to go under escort. He found the approaches to the " public " hall guarded by police, barricades erected in the streets, and the place wearing the air of a city under siege. No Suffragettes being allowed in the hall, their task, as they conceived it, was to make their presence felt outside.

Perhaps I have given an impression that the women were quite alone in this struggle, but for Mr. Pethick Lawrence. That was not the case. Men friends of the

Cause had already done and suffered much, and were both to do and to suffer more.

In this Newcastle meeting, as in others from which women were excluded, men stood up and called on the official speaker to apply Liberal principles to the treatment of women. But in Newcastle, as elsewhere, though men might interrupt and "heckle" with impunity upon any other ground under heaven, the man who dared so much as mention the thing taboo was thrown out of the hall. When several men had been ejected from Mr. Lloyd George's Newcastle meeting, the Minister made his contribution to the flood of obloquy let loose upon believers in Liberalism towards women as well as towards men. While his supporters applied physical force, the Minister's contribution to the moral aspect of the struggle was to call those men "hirelings" who dared be genuine Suffragists. The Press reported Mr. Lloyd George as saying: "There are many ways of earning a living, but this is the most objectionable of them all." The speaker made clear that from his point of view any man who should insist that Woman Suffrage be amongst the important issues considered at a Liberal meeting must be "hired" to hold so far-fetched a theory of public duty.

In England the standard of official character and the ideal of public service are, in the main, as I believe, the best the world yet knows. Yet in these now familiar charges that selfish aims inspired the sacrifices made by Suffragists; the cry of "bribes" and "Tory gold" (when the sixpences and shillings of working women have shown so fine a total); the taunt of "hireling" sent after beaten and bruised protesters at Ministers' meetings—these things seem to argue a conscious meanness in the spirit which still animates many a public servant. He seems in his heart to know that *he* could not face such treatment as is meted out to Suffragists unless he were "hired." And he cannot help betraying his true character as less servant of the public welfare than slave of his personal ambition. But in the Liberal

rank and file, as well as in the Unionist, Irish, and Labour parties, was genuine championship of the Suffrage Cause. A notable example had just been given by Mr. Nevinson and Mr. Brailsford—who both resigned from the staff of the leading Liberal paper on account of the policy adopted against the best interests of Woman.

Mr. Brailsford's wife was, with Lady Constance Lytton and others, "protesting" in the streets of Newcastle on the night of October 9th, while Mr. Lloyd George talked Liberalism in the guarded hall. A good many women were arrested, and among them Lady Constance and Mrs. Brailsford. The authorities felt that to imprison and maltreat the wife of a Liberal journalist, and the sister of a peer, might be inconvenient. These ladies were released after two and a half days. Thereupon inconvenient questions were asked in the House. The Home Secretary emphatically denied that either influence with the Press, or social position, had anything to do with letting these ladies off so lightly. They had been released, he assured the world, on "purely medical grounds."

The other women, not being wives of well-known journalists, or sisters of peers, were detained in prison and forcibly fed. This was before the temper of the rank and file was hardened, and presumably these prisoners did not add to the misery of forcible feeding by violent resistance.

Lady Constance Lytton knew quite well to what to attribute the fact that she was at liberty, whilst her companions and others who had joined them were being subjected to treatment which the authorities shrank from applying to Lord Lytton's sister.

In January, 1910, Lady Constance determined to offer a test case in her own person. She cut off her hair, put on spectacles and working-woman's clothes, and led a party of women to the gates of the provincial prison where some of the Suffragettes were confined. She told the public what was being done to the women inside, and demanded their release.

She was instantly arrested, and sentenced to fourteen days' hard labour. In prison she was forcibly stripped and dressed in prison clothes. When she had fasted for several days four wardresses entered her cell at the heels of the prison doctor. He did not so much as go through the form of testing that heart which had been an object of such solicitude in Newcastle Gaol, in the Home Office, and in the House of Commons. "Jane Warton," as the prisoner called herself, was bound and gagged. Under the disguise of the borrowed name, Lady Constance went through that "living nightmare of pain and horror and revolting degradation"—forcible feeding.

In a few days' time the gaol officials became convinced that this prisoner was not a working woman, and probably not even Jane Warton; that she was, in any case, a woman suffering from grave heart trouble, and likely to die on their hands. So they allowed her to take out of prison a broken body, and such a case against the conduct of the business of the Home Office as made its chief think South Africa preferable to Westminster.

Meanwhile, the experiences of the Suffrage prisoners were made widely known through the W.S.P.U. paper, "Votes for Women." Each arrest widened the little circle of enlightenment as to women's true position in the community.

More and more of the better-off women were impelled to inquire into the foundation for the unshakable conviction that lay underneath all this sacrifice.

What was the reason some people were ready to endure so much for the sake of the right to choose the Nation's law-makers? What was amiss with the law, the fortunate women began to ask? One lady, a member of the aristocracy, wrote to the papers to say that, for her part, she was quite pleased with things as they are.

Some of the women who had least cause to be pleased with things as they are, were not in a position to ventilate their views. Others were called on to do this for them.

X

WHY ?

Printed in "Everybody's Magazine," N.Y., December, 1909, and by instalments in "Votes for Women," and in pamphlet form by the Women Writers' Suffrage League

1. WHY are women of all classes in England banding themselves together to work for political enfranchisement ?

2. Why have women subscribed in a little over a year, to one society alone (the Women's Social and Political Union), £50,000 to the Cause ?

3. Why will nurses, artists, librarians, writers, teachers, etc., give up congenial work to labour twice as hard, on half-pay or none, for the Suffrage ?

4. Why will well-bred girls and older women sell Suffrage papers in the street—exposing themselves to the scant civility of the police and the horseplay of rowdies ?

5. Why are they ready to accept the alienation of many of their friends and most of their menfolk ?

6. Why, instead of petitioning for justice, are the women now demanding it ?

7. Why, instead of helping to elect another "Member" to go to Parliament and support the Suffrage

cause, are women going themselves in thousands "to knock at the doors of the House"?

8. Why, rather than agree to abandon a dangerous and often health-destroying agitation, have hundreds of women gone to prison?

9. Why, if these are good tactics, were they not employed before?

10. And why, after all, do women want the vote?

These are among the questions I am told people ask. Yet, though I speak under correction, these are questions which I am convinced many persons do not wish to have answered.

Not merely the idle and brainless, but many able and busy men ask only: How shall we silence these women? Instead of seeking information at the hands of experts ready with an answer—the medical women, the nurses, the Poor Law Guardians, the teachers, the district visitors, the University Settlement folk, women factory-inspectors,—when such applicants for the vote come forward with their evidence, what happens? Where they were formerly given smooth speeches, they are now spared even that hypocrisy. They are told, in more or less direct terms, that the authorities do not want their evidence.

I do not pretend to know how much longer the practice will be pursued of refusing a hearing to reputable public-spirited experts, when these experts[1] are guilty of being women. But I know that

[1] Amongst others coming under this head, the Prime Minister has refused to receive a deputation of Women Doctors and another of Head-Schoolmistresses.

only one of the two main results of that refusal is clear to the man in the street. The result that is clear is: the stone through the window of the Government office.

The other result—not clear at all and well therefore to point out—is of the same nature as that mischance which, it is whispered at London dinner-tables, recently befell the King. Among the relays of guests visiting His Majesty was a small Princess whose beauty and liveliness brought upon her the special notice of her august host. She was given (at some purely domestic luncheon) the seat of honour. Far from feeling any proper embarrassment at her elevation, she made bold to converse at her ease. That slackening of the ancient order wherein so firmly, once, did sit the dread and fear of kings—this *Zeit-Tendenz* would seem to be apparent even in Royal Palaces.

In the middle of an observation on the part of His Majesty, the small Princess made bold to interrupt. "When I am speaking," said the King, "you must be silent." The child thereafter sat obediently quiet, eating her meal. At last, the King, thinking he had been, perhaps, over-severe with his little kinswoman, patted her kindly on the shoulder: "Now we can listen to you, my dear." "Oh, it is too late now," said the little Princess. "I was only going to tell you there was a caterpillar in your salad. But you've eaten it."

A similar experience awaits those who refuse the testimony of the eager eyes, and clear practical brains, of "the women who know." But the result

is at times even more serious. For the caterpillar is eaten not only by those in authority who decline to be warned. It is eaten by the innocent multitude who have had no chance of being warned. Our concern is mainly for them, rather than for the comfortable minority so ready to be soothed by the Anti-Suffragist assurance that naught is amiss except with Suffragettes, and that behind the stone-throwing, behind the thousands of orderly meetings, behind the £50,000 is mere hysteria or hooliganism. The women who say that are not all so ignorant as they give themselves out. Many of them, rather than introduce inconvenient facts, rather than break through some small social convention, will sit as still as the little Princess and see the caterpillar go down with the salad. These are the "safe" tactics—warranted to ensure general approval.

Yet, I will assume that there are, as some think, persons willing to have unpalatable facts pointed out. I will answer *seriatim* the questions propounded at the beginning of this paper, devoting the greater portion of my space to consideration of the first, which comprehends the last.

1. To the initial question on the list (why women of all classes in England are banding themselves together to work for political enfranchisement) there seem to be three answers.

(*a*) Because women have discovered what men said they never would discover, namely: that the higher interests of all classes are the same, and that though the working woman has the more

patent and pressing need of this reform, the woman of the upper and middle classes has equal, if less obvious, need of it.

(*b*) Thinking women have found that to work for the public good without working through the laws, is to salve one's soul with mere charity-mongering. It is to scratch at the surface instead of striking at the root of evil.

(*c*) All sorts and conditions of women have come to realise that each class has urgent need of the support of the others for the hastening of this reform.

Now the reason the reform is urged with less unanimity and vigour in certain other countries, is because the need for it is less widely known by the women of those countries. Why is the need more widely known to English women?

Because for two hundred years "the political woman" has been a factor in English social life.[1]

Because, earlier still, English women of the upper class inherited, and carried on, a tradition of the responsibility of the fortunate towards the less fortunate. The attitude of the great lady and of the vicar's wife and daughters, has been imitated by those who wish to establish their credit in the community. This survival of a feudal usage has its drawback in a tendency among the poor towards servility, and in a tendency among the rich towards

[1] Scattered up and down the Biographies of public men, in the various collections of Letters and political memorabilia, is material for a highly significant book, setting forth the extent of the power exercised (in the bad old days of indirect influence) by the political *salon* —swaying opinion as it undoubtedly did, distributing patronage, making and unmaking men and ministries.

condescension—but in that it brought some actual knowledge and a more human relationship between class and class, it is by so much wholesomer than indifference or blind antagonism, that it will probably save England from the more violent encounters between the Rich and the Poor. The social revolution here will come with less jar and bitterness because the door of communication between the House of Have and the Hut of Have-Not has been kept open, not as in America, either irrevocably shut or open only to the menfolk of either camp.

These two factors, then, knowledge of the forces at work and a feeling on the part of the upper-class woman that it was not permissible for her to stand altogether aloof—a feeling that, however much the times were changed, she was morally still under that old feudal obligation to look after the people about her who needed looking after—these two things formed the foundation upon which the present agitation is based among the more conservative English Suffragists.

It should not be forgotten that if the Woman Suffrage Movement owes its commanding proportions to the working-class woman, the needs and views of these women have been given their publicity and their collective weight through the organising power of educated women. The agitation will prove itself invincible in England because behind the formerly inarticulate army of the working women were these leaders who learned leadership quietly, slowly, through the decades that lie behind. For forty years, or more, women of some leisure and en-

lightenment have been serving on School Boards, as Poor Law Guardians, on Hospital and Organised Charity Boards, on Vestries. Largely then, because of this quiet work done in the past, a work that built up the will to serve at the same time that it brought widespread knowledge of women's disabilities, legal, industrial, domestic—because having been made to realise the world's need of women in public affairs (as those of us without the English tradition of responsibility yoked to practical experience have not realised it)—because, in brief, an immense number of women in England know the answers to the questions set at the head of this article, therefore it is that, among the greater nations, England is leading the world in intensity of interest in this reform.

I have given as part of the answer to the first question on our list: women's discovery of the futility of hoping to effect social amelioration without getting at the roots of evil. The roots of civic good or evil are the laws that govern the community. Now women in England are discouraged from having any first-hand knowledge of law. If they want to know something of the foundations whereon civilised life is built, they must go to men for information. This being so, men having said women shall have no share in framing, in administering, in interpreting, or in practising law, women might suppose men would be very careful to give the other sex a fair version of the knowledge open, in its fullness, only to men. Yet again and again men of intelligence and good repute have told us that the English law is fair to women. I have heard excellent-meaning men say the law

showed women favouritism. They believed it—so blunted had become their sense of justice. Under examination this "favouritism" they tell of, invariably turns out to be the mere rags of survival of the old chattel-view of women, laws like that of coverture—not framed for the good of the wife, but for the convenience or greater safety of the husband, laws which a saner view of the sexes will annul. The legislator of the future will listen in vain to hear women's voices raised to advocate retention of these marks of "favouritism" upon the statute books.

One may hope that men who honestly think the English law treats women so much as fairly, will read Lady McLaren's "Women's Charter." There are few people in England occupying a better post of vantage than Lady McLaren from which to write upon the subject. With reference to the laws of inheritance this authority says:

"As women devote so much of their time to the unpaid work of rearing children, it appears natural that special provision should be made for them out of the inherited wealth of the country. So far from this being the case, we find that it is the man who takes the greater share of the inherited property, although he is able to work for himself during the best years of his life."

Lady McLaren speaks of "the strangely penniless condition of Englishwomen, though they are citizens of the richest nation in the world." She contrasts the French custom of providing the daughter with a

dot, thereby enabling her "to become a partner in marriage instead of a dependent."

But not from all men do we hear the "favouritism," or even the common fairness, of the English law upheld. In his text-book on English Law the eminent Jurist and Anti-Suffragist, Prof. Dicey, says with praiseworthy frankness: "The four Married Women's Property Acts are a record of the hesitation and dullness of Members of Parliament." He speaks of "recurring blunders which one may hope without any great confidence have been at last corrected."

"When the present Divorce Act was enacted," says Lady McLaren, "Mr. Gladstone himself declared it to be 'a gross injustice to women in favour of men,' and it would have been impossible to pass such a measure into law had the views of women been represented in the House of Commons." The lawyer from one of whose printed books I take some of my facts[1] says with regard to the laws of inheritance as affecting women:

"The conduct of most Englishmen in this respect is nothing short of disgraceful. In France it is quite usual for one brother to take the land and to pay out the other members of the family. Each gets his or her share equally, whether they are sons or daughters. But in case the land has to be divided each still gets his or her share. This not only puts Frenchwomen in a better position as wives and mothers than any Englishwomen, except in the rare case of an only

[1] Ralph Thicknesse, author of "A Digest of the Law of Husband and Wife," "The Rights and Wrongs of Women," etc.

daughter of a rich man; but it also gives them an interest in agriculture, and business, which is hardly to be found among Englishwomen. It further carries with it a respect towards women by the men of their own class, which is equally rare here."

We find, on looking further into the "favouritism" shown women by the law, facts such as these:

"An unmarried woman who has money, or can make it, can live her own life, see her own friends and act like a free and responsible being, but with regard to a married woman the law still holds that she is 'under the control and custody of her husband'; 'She is under his guardianship, and he is entitled to prevent her from indiscriminate intercourse with the world.'" "She must bring up *his* children as he pleases, the fact that they are *her* children does not count."

The wife cannot legally compel the husband to provide for her or the children out of his wages so long as husband and wife are living together. She has no means except persuasion to get even a part of her husband's earnings.

"It is sometimes said that a man is legally bound to provide for his wife and children, but this is misleading" (says Mr. Thicknesse, sometime of Lincoln's Inn). "It becomes true only if wife and children go to the workhouse." (Note that this provision is not for the relief of the women, but for the relief of the State.) "If she has friends, she may get temporary

shelter, and apply to the magistrate for a separation order. Even here injustice follows her."

"In England" [says this lawyer] "property comes before everything."

"The income of the married pair must be added together for the purposes of income tax, unless they are living separately" [a premium on disunion].

"The incomes of a man and a woman, unmarried, living together, are taxed separately" [a premium on illegal relations].

As Mr. Thicknesse says:

"The husband not infrequently has spent the dead first wife's money on a second wife, and on children of a second marriage, depriving the children of the first marriage of it either partially or entirely."

A man can not only will his property away from his wife, and leave her penniless—he can even will his property away from his children, and leave them penniless charges upon a penniless widow.

In the absence of a will or settlement a woman, married or single, can inherit land only if she has neither father nor brother living.

For instance:

A married man owning freehold land and leaving issue, dies intestate. The widow has the use of one-third of this freehold property during her life-

A married woman owning freehold land dies intestate. Her husband has the use and profit of all of the land during his lifetime and after his death

time. Neither she nor any of the children inherit a foot of the freehold property outright, except the eldest son, who gets it all.

If a man owning personal or real estate dies intestate, and childless, his widow gets of her husband's property the value of £500, and the use of one-third of his freehold property for the remainder of her life.

If a man leaving issue dies intestate the widow has in his estate only a third interest, if there are children. If there are no children, she has a half interest. In default of next of kin the other half of the husband's property reverts to the Crown.

the eldest son gets all the land, the other children get none.

A woman's father owning land dies intestate. Her brother takes all the land, she gets none.

A woman's brother owning land dies intestate. If their father is alive he gets all the land.

A woman's sister owning land dies intestate. Their father takes all the land, the surviving sister gets none.

If a woman dies intestate her husband takes all her personal property and has an unqualified right to administer and manage it. Neither her children nor her relations from whom she may have got this personal property can get any part of it.

One of the most iniquitous of all these provisions is the following:

> In the case of the death of a son or a daughter, the mother inherits nothing from either. The whole of their property, even if it has come from the mother's family, goes to the father or to the father's next of kin.
>
> ("Women's Charter," p. 20.)

Lady McLaren suggests that among reforms by the way, that of the Church Marriage Service should not be forgotten. This service was drawn up and sanctioned by Parliamentary authority in the Act of Uniformity, and is under the direct control of Parliament. It postulates the inferiority of women, and commands the woman to submit to her husband in all things as the Church submits to God. It obliges her to take a vow of obedience to her husband which neither the Roman Catholic nor the Nonconformist bodies impose on her. "It commits the husband to the entirely false declaration that he endows his wife with all his worldly goods, when he usually neither does, nor intends to do, anything of the kind."

Many women, and I do not doubt men as well, have felt that the service abounds in expressions suited only to a coarser age. A very proper suggestion has been made that the House of Commons

should require the Bishops in Convocation to draw up a new service which would be in accordance both with womanly dignity and with legal truth.

In that home which woman is told is her "sphere" (where she is to "rule as queen") she has not only no control over any portion of the means of livelihood (unless she owns or earns it herself), nor control even over the material contents of her house—she has no legal right in her own children unless (significant exception) they are born out of wedlock. The children's mother has no legal right to a voice in deciding how they shall be nursed; how or where educated; what trade or profession they shall adopt; in what form of religion they shall be instructed.

For instance:

A devoted Churchwoman loses her husband when her children are young. He has never expressed any opinion as to the children's religious education. His family are militant Nonconformists. After the man's death, his family are legally justified in assuming the religious up-bringing of the children, since the dead father in his youth had been a member of the grandparent's particular sect and had not publicly broken with it. The strong convictions of the mother go for nothing.

Another instance: A woman studies medicine. She becomes a convinced homœopathist. Her husband, a stockbroker, insists on subjecting his children to the rigour of old-fashioned allopathy. The mother must stand and look on, helpless, while the children she is responsible for bringing into the world are

treated after a fashion she and many others believe to be pernicious.

If a father wants his child vaccinated, or if he is merely indifferent, and so does not lay an objection before the magistrate, the mother cannot prevent the child's being vaccinated. If the father wishes the child to be left unvaccinated, the mother cannot legally have it done.

A Custody of Children's Act was passed in 1891. It enables the parent to get back a child from the hands of a third person, but it is only the child's father who can use this law.

"There is no branch of English law," says Lady McLaren, "which more urgently needs attention than that relating to the guardianship of children"—(and not because men have never had their attention called to the abuses which deface that law).

"The late Sir Horace Davey introduced a Bill which proposed that father and mother should be acknowledged equal guardians of their children. This just and logical reform secured only nineteen votes in the House of Commons. The father remains sole guardian. Even when he is dead he may still, by having taken the precaution to appoint a guardian, be able to override the wishes of the children's living mother."

She cannot, even if she is a widow, appoint anyone to act for her children after her death, if her husband has already appointed a guardian.

The mother may by deed, or will, provisionally

appoint a guardian to act jointly *with the father* after her death. If the Court is satisfied that the father is not fitted to act as sole guardian, it may confirm the appointment.

This last wears an air of quasi-justice, but, like all other laws, it must be interpreted and applied by one sex only, by the sex to whom the father's interests are those that make, inevitably, their surest appeal.

I will give one instance as to how it may work out. A woman, not poor and obscure, but well known in English society, married a man who soon tired of her and transferred his attentions to a rival. I cannot remember now whether he openly went off with No. 2, but I know that after a series of humiliations and heart-breaking experiences which were the common talk of their world, the neglected wife was glad to give up the father of her child to the second woman, and to live alone, devoting herself to the education of her little girl, the only child of the marriage.

After a few years the deserted wife died. She had appointed a brother or sister as guardian to the child, then about ten years old. The husband promptly married his mistress, who was a woman of good birth. The man, rich, influential, belonging to a well-known family, was forgiven his peccadilloes, but people hesitated for a while to accept the new wife. She, however, had set her heart on social recognition. The little girl, she saw, was a possible means of rehabilitation. She induced the father to demand the custody of the child. There was an action at law, and the Court set aside the provision of the mother, took the child from its guardian, and gave it into the

keeping of the woman who had wrecked the dead mother's life. The second wife went about parading her devotion to the child, using her as a stalking-horse. The device failed by reason of the undisguised antipathy of the little girl for her dead mother's enemy. Nothing would induce her to play up. She was silent and sullen. The second wife presently decided that the unhappy little creature was "queer." Oh, but very queer indeed not to be gay and lively and affectionate with so desirable a stepmother! As the child continued to mope and pine, the second wife wearied of her bargain. She was a resourceful lady. She started the theory that the child was mentally deficient. To make a long and hideous story short, the woman prevailed upon the father (who was as much as ever under her influence) to put his child into an idiot asylum. The girl was there for several years. She must have been blessed with uncommonly steady wits, for, in spite of the peril of such associations, she developed no sign of mental lesion. "Paying Patient" as she was, the asylum authorities by and by refused to keep her any longer, since after the careful surveillance of years they failed to discover anything whatever amiss. They announced to the father their conclusion that the child ought never to have been placed in the asylum, and she was accordingly sent home. Whereupon the stepmother promptly packed her off to school. Now the end of this narrative ought to be that the girl was permanently injured by her ghastly experience at the asylum. She happened to be of more enduring stuff. At school she rapidly made up for lost time and distinguished her-

self in two widely different directions: by carrying off school prizes; and, as a fellow-pupil has reported, by ministering to the gaiety of the institution. In any dull moment: "Show us what the idiots did," her schoolfellows would say. And this astounding young person, of a surely unshakable mental equilibrium, would oblige amid peals of laughter.

But if the laws bear hardly on the women of education and means, do they deal more mercifully with those obviously more in need of championship—with the ignorant and the poor? Certainly many of the reasons, legal and other, that actuate women of property to demand a voice in equalising the laws, are different from the reasons that actuate the hard-driven working woman. But, coming to the matter as those two classes do, from different points of the social compass, and finding as they most indubitably have found a common meeting-point—they are seen to stand there shoulder to shoulder crying: "Votes for Women!"

We will examine some of the facts (I take them almost at random) which have brought the working woman to the point of revolt.

Broadly speaking, the fact mainly responsible (as has often been pointed out) is the intrusion of the spirit of commercial exploitation into the woman's sphere. Many of the people who cry loudest, "Woman's sphere is the home," are men who draw their revenues and derive their power from this invasion of what they call Woman's Sphere. They are owners or shareholders in mills and factories where the age-old work of women, spinning, weaving, baking, brewing, soap and candle making, etc., is done

on a scale so vast and so sadly cheap that the world is flooded with shoddy wares and the beautiful handicrafts have died. What of the women who have been taken away from their homes in tens of thousands to mind machinery in the sacred cause of commerce? There is a satisfying fitness in the fact that it is the modern representatives of those dispossessed women who form the largest and most powerful group of organised women demanding the vote to-day. Capable of improvement as their condition is, they nevertheless get higher wages, better environment in labour, they boast a higher standard of home comfort, and more generous provision for their children and their own old age, than any other group of working women.

Now, no one denies that thousands of women outside the textile trades are working without let or hindrance for a starvation wage. Sweated labour is not only permitted, but even (as will be shown) is encouraged by the Government. Thousands of destitute women-workers are forced into the ranks of the unemployed, and are mercilessly neglected by the authorities, while those same authorities invent emergency work for unemployed men. The curious and instructive thing is that, with all the difficulty women encounter in getting decently paid work, when women *have* got it, the Government in the person of its President of the Local Government Board advocates taking this well-paid textile work away from women and giving it to men. It is proposed that married women-workers (a great proportion are married) be compelled to stay at home.

No question of asking the women what they think about this proposal. But what they think about it may be inferred from the fact that the threat of interference with the right to work has given us 96,000 Suffragists. The manifesto of the Lancashire Textile Workers says:

"The position of the unenfranchised working women, who are by their voteless condition shut out from all political influence, is daily becoming more precarious. They cannot hope to hold their own in industrial matters where their interests may clash with those of their enfranchised fellow-workers or employers. The one all-absorbing and vital political question for labouring women is to force an entrance into the ranks of responsible citizens, in whose hands lies the solution of the problems which are at present convulsing the industrial world," etc. etc.

A friend of mine fell into talk with a tidy, contented-looking mill-woman of thirty-odd in a tram-car the other day. The woman spoke of her home with pride. "It doesn't suffer, then, by your being so much away?" "Oh no, I have a housekeeper." At my friend's evident surprise she explained: "... a nice oldish body who isn't up to mill-work, but keeps the house and children as neat as a pin." "Children? You think it's good for them that their mother should be so much away?" "They're away themselves a good bit. They go to school. But it *is* good for them that my thirty shillings a week makes us able to feed and clothe them decent. And it's good for the housekeeper-body, who hasn't a home of her own,

to have mine to work in and earn her bread honest." To have heard that woman's views on the proposed restriction of women's work might have opened the eyes of legislators. "What will you do," asked my friend, "if Mr. John Burns carries out his scheme?" "Eh," said the woman, "if he does that, I suppose we'll have to clem" (starve).

But the textile workers though, as we have seen, their privileges are threatened, form the aristocracy of industry. What of the others, the women who work in sweat shops, and the home-workers? Let us ask Elizabeth O'Brien. Not as one of the worst off. Mrs. O'Brien is not a fur-picker, with little food to put in her stomach, and plenty of fluff to put in her lungs; not a dipping-house assistant at the potteries, losing her eyesight, suffering from finger-drop, and having "since working in the lead one stillborn child and six miscarriages."[1] Elizabeth O'Brien is a tailoress, aged fifty-six, maker of uniforms for the grand new Territorial Army. It is a mere chance that we are able to elicit Mrs. O'Brien's views, for the other day she threw herself into the Thames off Lambeth Bridge. She was rescued and brought up in Westminster Police-Court. It was found that her husband had been dead nine months, and that, working with might and main at clothing the British Army, she could not keep herself alive and pay room-rent at 2s. 6d. a week. The Police-Court Missionary, Mr. Barnett, upon careful investigation of the woman's story, added his evidence later. He had found that the would-be suicide was a highly re-

[1] See James Haslam: August "Gentlewoman."

spectable woman. She did her tailoring at Messrs. Dolan's, clothing contractors, ten and a half hours a day, from eight in the morning till eight at night, with intervals for meals—and she earned less than a shilling a day. Upon inquiry at Dolan's, the Police-Court Missionary was told she was rather a slow worker (strange at fifty-six!), and therefore it was that she earned at most 6s. a week, and often only 4s., 3s., or even 2s. at basting and finishing police trousers at 3¾d., and a farthing a pair for putting foot-straps on cavalry overalls. This was agreed to be hard work for an elderly woman, since it necessitated the use of an awl. For doing the various kinds of sewing upon a pair of "Territorial" breeches, Messrs. Dolan paid 8d. No woman, it was admitted, could make two pairs in a day. The magistrate said: "It is obvious it means starvation unless the woman is helped." He told Mrs. O'Brien to "keep a good heart. We will see what we can do for you." One would not suggest that the magistrate did not keep his word. The point is that hundreds of such cases are never heard of. This one happened to come before the public. Mrs. O'Brien's employers (not the real ones in high office, but the middlemen, Messrs. Dolan) were made to feel a little uncomfortable. They sent their solicitor to make a public statement before a magistrate. The firm desired to emphasise the fact that the whole of this trouble (which was one of much public importance) was due to the prices at which contractors are compelled by the force of competition to take Government work. If the Government were to insist on the rate of wages

being standardised ("as undoubtedly they should," said Messrs. Dolan's representative), this system of cutting down prices to the lowest fraction would be at an end. There is one public body to-day, the London County Council, which insists upon a standardised rate for tailoring, and the workers on their uniforms do not complain and are said to have no reason to. According to the Police-Court Missionary, further investigation deepened rather than mitigated the tragedy of the case of this woman, who was employed on Government work at a wage insufficient to keep her alive, though she was hard at it from eight in the morning till eight at night. Here was a woman, nearing sixty, who had lived without reproach. Besides giving the State good service and trousers at 8d. a pair, she had given the country a man to wear them—her only son, a private in the 2nd Dragoon Guards bearing a good character.

What had the State done for the woman?

What the State proposes to do for another woman, whose case came to light about the same time, is to take out of her life its one redeeming element. This woman was the wife of an excellent man who had been trying in vain for five months to get work. During part of the time the woman had the good fortune to be given a job at Pink's jam factory. This sole piece of luck (which is the part of the story which the Government proposes to eliminate) enabled her, while it lasted, to support her husband *and seven children*. She told the Court she did not know what would have happened but for that job. Yet she had found out what could happen when the job failed.

Her husband had to get money somehow to keep the family from starvation. Some men would have stolen it. This man got it from a money-lender. But so far as the outward result went, he might as well have stolen it. On account of this debt of 28s. he was haled off to prison.

Many women of the miscalled educated class probably think that imprisonment for debt was abolished at the same time as the old Marshalsea Prison. But in this, as in so many other practical matters, our less fortunate sisters could better our instruction. This mother of seven, for instance, who for the lack of 28s. saw her "Woman's kingdom" lost and her children fatherless and hungry. "How much money have you now?" the judge asked. "Nothing." "Not a shilling in the world?" "Not a penny." The judge gave her 6d. and sent for the money-lender. When the judge had heard all the evidence he ordered the debtor's discharge. He then asked the woman, "Have you the means to go and fetch your husband from the gaol?" "I have only the 6d. you gave me, sir," said the woman. "Have you had no food, then? I gave it to you for that." "I kept it till we could have it all together, sir. There are seven little ones."

The temper of this judge chanced not to be unkindly. But, inadequate as 6d. may be to retrieve the ruined fortunes of nine people, not all judges have even 6d. worth of humanity to offer the women who come before them.

Those who would like to believe that administrators of the law can be trusted to show consideration

to women should take counsel with Mrs. A. of Chelsea. She is the wife of a mechanic. This man ill-treats his wife to the extent that she goes in fear of her life. She took her little boys the other day to the police-court and applied for a separation order. The magistrate told her to "go home and do the best she could." The children, who had seen the indignities, and the physical danger, to which their mother was subjected by their father, received in the police-court a further lesson in the duties of men towards women. They heard this symbol of justice and of ultimate power, the awe-inspiring magistrate, tell their mother that she had not yet suffered sufficient injury at the hands of her husband for her to have earned the right to live away from him. The learned opinion was that "a man was entitled to knock his wife about a bit." Whether the magistrate was shameless enough to use some such words, or whether he merely conveyed to the woman in more guarded terms his view of the husbandly prerogative, the effect upon his audience was the same. The law allowed men this privilege. Indeed, that the law should do so excited little surprise in the minds of persons belonging to a class familiarised with the petty fines imposed upon notorious wife-beaters, and the frequently proved fact that it is legally a more reprehensible act to steal a loaf to feed your starving family than to give the mother of that family a pair of black eyes.[1]

[1] Not a week passes but terrible cases of this kind come before the police-courts. For years the newspaper "Truth" (not prejudiced in favour of women's equality before the law, since it is conducted by an Anti-Suffragist of many years' standing, Mr. Henry Labouchere) has pointed out the absurd inadequacy of the sentences passed even in the aggravated cases of such assault.

If we who have books and leisure consult the authorities, we find that assault upon a wife is punishable by fine or imprisonment. Yet in practice an ill-used woman, ignorant and unrepresented, finds magistrates in agreement to send her "home" (!) to her husband, to "do the best you can."

But to be beaten without redress, and even without hope of future legal protection, that is not the worst that may come of this "best" which is all the law may have to offer.

Of the women who have sorry cause to know that, is the wife of a day-labourer living not two miles from Westminster. Mrs. B. was another of these applicants for a separation order (since divorce is too dear a luxury for any of this class). The ground of Mrs. B.'s plea is the infidelity of her husband. "You can't get a separation order for that." "Well, but he brings the woman home—he keeps her in the house." "That is no ground." Then the magistrate is given the heart of the grievance. The husband insists on having the interloper in his wife's bedroom. No redress. Because the husband had not turned the wife out, because he professed himself willing to support her, the supplanted wife (not only ready, eager to leave him with her rival) was refused a separation order. She is coerced into accepting the degrading conditions laid down by the man inside her home, because the men outside (represented by the magistrate) say these degrading conditions are just and legal. At every crisis in her life she finds the law invading that sphere where woman is told she reigns supreme.

Those legislators who propose to make it illegal for married women to work outside their homes do not even begin by doing away with the age-old legal abuses which any day may make a woman's home the worst place for her on the surface of the earth. If a woman of the kind whose story I have just told is still young enough and strong enough, just one way of escape is opened to her this side death. For that woman (and many another) there is nothing between her and moral degradation except the chance to earn her own living and thereby the right to sleep in an undefiled bed. If this woman has a daughter or the ear of any young woman, who can suppose she will not urge the girl to get, and to hold fast, some means of livelihood other than, or in addition to, the profession of wife? If she does not, the reason will be that her experience has left her either brutalised or cowed.

The census of eight years ago gave the number of women working in trades for weekly wages as nearly four million. As Lady McLaren says, there is reason to suppose that this is much under the true figure, since many women still consider it more genteel to describe themselves as unoccupied, or as married women only.

A proof of the mortal need women feel of economic independence is found in the fact that against natural inclination and iron-bound tradition, more and more women leave their homes in search of work, in spite of the stumbling-blocks placed in their way, and in spite of the unfair discrimination made against women's work merely because it is done by a practically slave class.

In no department of human action have we found more plainly manifest the law that the evil growing out of injustice ultimately rebounds upon the doer—than in this of discrimination against women's work because it is not done by men. Men have lost through this discrimination far more than they could realise, because the discrimination was supposed to be in their favour. To-day, though they still insist on the maintenance of the principle that women should be paid less than men for precisely the same service, they begin to realise that this rule does not always operate in favour of men. They are crying out—not against its injustice, but against its more palpable immediate ill-effect upon themselves.

During a recent by-election in the North of England I first came face to face with the bitter feeling on the part of the working man against his underpaid rival, the working woman. A strike of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had been in progress for many weeks. As is well known, these north-country engineers are among the most intelligent and highest-paid workmen in the kingdom. To get them to vote in the way best calculated to serve the women's cause was an end worth striving for. The Government might ignore voteless women. The Government could not so well afford to ignore this body of highly organised working men armed with electoral power. Naturally, therefore, the President of the Women's Social and Political Union accepted gladly the first invitation ever given a woman to come and address a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

The meeting (held in a large room over a bar) was

packed with working men. No one making her way through the crowd could doubt that this opportunity to present the women's point of view was in the nature of a fluke. The resolution had presumably been passed when only a few of the men were present. The majority would never have agreed to it. The majority were present now to register their disapproval. I have never been at an indoor gathering where I felt the atmosphere more distinctly hostile. The chairman made a speech that was half apology, and begged for fair play. Mrs. Pankhurst rose to talk to men whose anxious thoughts had been concentrated for weeks upon their own bitter struggle, to men who knew nothing of the woman's movement. I noticed how many of the workmen never so much as looked towards the woman standing there in the cloud of tobacco smoke and talking so quietly. I saw how, little by little, whispering, grumbling groups dissolved, unwilling eyes were turned upon the speaker and the pipes went out. These men were at least listening. For she was talking to them not about Votes for Women, but about the men's immediate problem, talking as a fellow-citizen, one who had studied politics and for thirty years had worked with men for public ends. Although non-party and refusing to "take sides," she plainly knew more about the grounds of the great strike than many of the professed politicians who came from Westminster to instruct these men. She had their attention in that vice that never lets go till the last word falls.

Even the big man with the hunched shoulders, who had sat with averted eyes—slowly he was turning his

grizzled head. I was glad of that till I saw the look in his face. The speaker had summed up the situation—"and so after all these weeks you are still idle."

"*We* are idle," said the grizzled engineer, "but our machines aren't." There was a second's hush. "*There are women behind them*," he said. Like low thunder the muttering of the displaced men went through the room.

The speaker's face grew bright. It was precisely the opening she wanted. "And if women are sitting at your machines, whose fault is it? You are quick to blame the women. Who of you blame the men with full stomachs who employ those hungry women as strike-breakers? Who of you blame the people most to blame of all? The husbands, fathers, brothers of those women, who have kept them ignorant and unorganised. I think myself women can do more suitable work than make screws and polish brass-fittings. But I am *glad* those women are doing your work on half-pay!" There was some disturbance upon that, but her practised voice rose over it: "It is the only thing perhaps that women can do that will bring their difficulties home to men. Of course the state of things is evil. But you have the remedy, and you won't apply it. Men shut women out of their Unions, and yet expect women to starve for the sake of those Unions. You and your fathers have accepted the tradition that women of your own class shall be overworked and underpaid. Then you dare complain that women are overworked and underpaid. Whose fault is it that women don't play the game? Yours!—who refuse to allow them to learn it." She

hammered the truth into them red-hot. But what frightened them most, I think, was her showing how, for all that men could do, the woman-worker was forcing her way into one industry after another. And in truth, consideration of the statistics of displacement of men by women is a sobering exercise. Yet, as the speaker pointed out, men who have all fields open to them have not scrupled to take away women's work. "Not only do men bake and brew, they even knit and spin,[1] they sell lace and ribbons, they dress women's hair. What work have they left women? The unpaid drudgery of the house; the work in sweat shops that men despise. But women are growing tired of this division of labour. Not only amongst you here—everywhere." She showed how by ignoring the working woman the working man was cutting his own throat. "Many of those women at your machines would rather work at home. They can't afford to. Some of those women would rather set type or bind books. But these are skilled trades and highly paid. The Unions won't let women learn them. Nearly all technical training in this country is for boys. Women have to creep in wherever your misfortunes make an opening." "That's it!" somebody said at the back. "Your woman's a born blackleg!" "She's born no different from you, my friend, except that she will sooner sacrifice herself

[1] "I saw a man working a special knitting machine, earning £3 a week. He was waited on by a woman who earned 10s. a week. I asked the manager if the woman could not do the work at the knitting machine as well as the man? He said, 'Every bit as well; but the Trade Union rules will not allow it.'"—LADY MCLAREN in "The Woman's Charter."

to feed the children. In industry she stands where your fathers stood before they learned co-operation. You men have got every good thing you possess by standing together. Now I've come to tell you—we women want to stand together. And we want you to help us. If you won't do it for the sake of justice, do it for the sake of your own bread and butter. If any man in this room ought to be in favour of Women's Suffrage it should be my friend, there, who is so angry at the thought of a woman working his machine for half-pay."

It was the first time the Suffrage had been mentioned.

She showed them what good reason even the few organised working women had to know that political freedom must precede fair industrial conditions, and how hard the textile workers found the task of preventing unrepresented labour from being cheapened. This was not a problem rising here and there out of a strike —but the constant unending struggle. "Your only safety lies where our only safety lies: in equal pay for equal work."

It was a doctrine that pleased the engineers well. If women had to be paid the same, what employer in the iron trade wouldn't prefer an Amalgamated Engineer to a woman! Readily enough, now, they listened to what half an hour before would have fallen on deaf ears. They even applauded the sentiment: "You will never be safe, you will never yourselves be free till women are free. Only the enemies of your freedom are served by your refusing to stand by us in this struggle." She told them of the

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there would seem to be obvious reasons why a half-starved woman should be relieved at least as readily as a half-starved man. Yet that, as we in London know, is not the view of the Local Government Board.

Even in the mill districts, where in the staple industry of the place women workers predominate, £50,000 was voted by men for relief of men last autumn. How much did they vote should be set aside for unemployed women? Not a shilling.

But this and kindred evils tend constantly to be rectified, we are told. Why won't women be patient and leave the further betterment to time?

Those who ask that are people who have no faculty for making real to themselves, for so much as ten minutes, the misery that envelops others for all their lives. Nor do those stolid persons know what has been the result of leaving reform to some day other than our own. To do so is as rational as for the Christian to leave the salvation of his soul for his descendants to attend to. The people in direst need of this reform are mortal. While we delay and argue they suffer and die. But that is not the last of them. They leave to the world a legacy in the children of evil conditions.

Now, these children have the honour, the very existence of the country in their keeping. These children are the real problem. What about the children?

Mrs. Barnett, wife of Canon Barnett, so long of Toynbee Hall, says:

"The annals of the police-courts, the experience of the attendance officers of the London County

Council, the reports of the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the accounts of the vast young army in truant and industrial schools, the stories of the Waifs and Strays Society and Dr. Barnardo's organisation are hideously eloquent of the cruelty, the neglect, and the criminality of thousands of parents."

To penetrate the homes of the poor and ignorant, where so large a proportion of the children are growing up, is a task difficult if not impossible. As long as the parents can support their children (in however ill a fashion), they cannot, as society is at present constituted, be interfered with.

But what of the children who are under State control? How does the Government avail itself of its free hand in dealing with the 284,792 children wholly or partially dependent on the State, according to the Local Government Board's own return in January, 1908?

The answer to that question is not a pleasant thing to contemplate even on paper. The State keeps 22,483 of these children in workhouses. Here is a description of a Government nursery:

". . . Often found under the charge of a person actually certified as of unsound mind, the bottles sour, the babies wet, cold, and dirty. The Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded draws attention to an episode in connection with one feeble-minded woman who was set to wash a baby; she did so in boiling water, and it died."

But, as Mrs. Barnett points out, this state of affairs is no new discovery. A dozen years ago Dr. Fuller, the Medical Inspector, reported to the Local Government Board that "in sixty-four workhouses imbeciles, or weak-minded women, are entrusted with the care of infants." Dr. Fuller wasted his breath. The abuse still flourishes. As the Royal Commission admits, the person who to-day visits a workhouse nursery "finds it too often a place of intolerable stench under quite insufficient supervision, in which it would be a miracle if the babies continued in health."

"We were shocked," continues the Report, "to discover that infants in the nursery of the great palatial establishments in London and other large towns *seldom or never get into the open air.*

"We found the nursery frequently on the third or fourth story of a gigantic block often without balconies, whence the only means of access even to the workhouse yard was a flight of stone steps down which it was impossible to wheel a baby-carriage of any kind. There was no staff of nurses adequate to carrying fifty or sixty infants out for an airing. In some of these workhouses it was frankly admitted that these babies never left their own quarters (and the stench that we have described), and never got into the open air during the whole period of their residence in the workhouse nursery.

"In some workhouses 40 per cent of the babies die within the year. In ten others 493 babies were born, and only fourteen, or 8 per cent, perished before

they had lived through four seasons. In ten other workhouses 888 infants saw the light, and through the gates 114 coffins were borne, or 88 per cent of the whole."

"And the Local Government Board," says Mrs. Barnett, "has stood by for years and stands by still and lets the evils go on." This lady, speaking, as she says, with twenty-two years' experience as manager of a barrack school, two years' membership of the Departmental Committee, twelve years' work as the honorary secretary of the State Children's Association, records the well-grounded opinion that the children should be removed altogether from the care of the Local Government Board. "If such a report," Mrs. Barnett says, "had been issued on the work of the Admiralty or the War Office, the whole country would have demanded immediate change. 'They have tried and failed,' it would be said; 'let someone else try'; and a similar demand is made by those of us who have seen many generations of children exposed to these evils, and waited, and hoped, and despaired, and waited and hoped again."

I doubt if there exists in print a better plea for the urgency of Woman Suffrage than that embodied in the Minority Report of the latest English Poor Law Commission. This eloquent and amazing document is largely the result of years of work on the part of Mrs. Sidney Webb. It has been more discussed, more written about in the interval since its appearance, than any utterance on this or kindred

themes within our memory. And small wonder, for what it reveals is an incompetence and legalised cruelty in the treatment of the poor, that would be beyond belief did the Report come with less authority, or had anyone ventured to deny such allegations as that thousands of innocent children are shut up with tramps and prostitutes; that there are workhouses which have no separate sick ward for children, in spite of the ravages of measles, whooping-cough, etc.; that

"young children, in bed for minor ailments, have next them women of bad character under treatment for contagious disease, and other women in the same ward are in advanced stages of cancer, or senile decay; the pregnant women who come in to be confined are compelled to associate day and night, as well as to work, beside the half-witted and persons so physically deformed as to be positively repulsive to look upon."

But since men's consciences are admittedly stirred by these volumes of indictment, why may we not reasonably hope that the abuses complained of will be done away?

We may not hope that for a highly significant reason.

The worst concrete evil arraigned (the general Mixed Workhouse) was condemned root and branch as long ago as 1834. It has been condemned decade by decade ever since, by successive experts who had the ear of the Government of the day. The evil of existing conditions was admitted during a whole generation, by the Local Government itself.

Why was nothing done ?

The administrators of the interests of the poor became entangled in the red tape of various conflicting authorities, with the result that the inefficiency and the inhumanity in this branch of municipal housekeeping is not a scandal only but a menace. The presence of women on the Boards of Guardians has been a help, not so much because of what, under the limitation of their power, they were able actually to do, but because of the opportunity their very helplessness gave them of gauging the evils bred by the operation of unwise laws and acquiesced in by the authorities.

Men have talked about these evils for five-and-seventy years. We see now that until the portion of the community standing closest to the problems presented by care of the old and broken, the young children and the afflicted, until women have a voice in mending the laws on this subject, the inadequacy of the laws will continue to be merely discussed.

2. Those who have read thus far will perhaps scarcely need to be told, now, why women in one society alone have subscribed £50,000 in a little over a twelvemonth for the defence of woman's right to a voice in public affairs.

This large sum has been contributed because, though the poorer half of the community, women are more ready than men to practise self-denial for a common good. This is not, as some men have told us, because women are congenitally more altruistic than men. It is because women are more used to the exercise of self-control. They are there-

fore less at the mercy of their appetites. This £50,000 that women have given to the W.S.P.U. is but a first instalment. It is largely the money of the poor. For it is not the so-called "rich women" who have most to give. The rich woman is often merely the wife of a rich man—a very different matter from having command of wealth.

8. The next question asks: "Why will nurses, artists, librarians, writers, teachers give up congenial work to labour twice as hard, on half-pay or none, for the Suffrage?"

Because the women enumerated above are the kind whose personal experience has made clear the connection between the vote and wages; teachers, for instance, who have given up posts in the National Schools to work for the militant Suffrage party, knowing that the Education Authorities will never allow them to return to work which (though unfairly paid as compared with men's remuneration for similar work) was to these teachers all that livelihood may mean to women who earn their bread. They are fired to add their quota to sacrifices others are making towards the end that those, who come after, may not find their hold on work more insecure than a man's, or the salary less than a man's, for no fault in the work except that it was done by a woman.

A fresh illustration of how the action of politicians may directly affect women's work was afforded by the Education Authorities' recent attempt to dismiss married women from headmistress-ship of schools. Among others (who for no reason but that they were women and not single) Mrs. Stansfield

was told her services would be no longer required. This lady was already married at the time of her appointment. No one denies that she has made a distinguished success as a teacher. But she is to give up her profession because, if women are so indiscreet as to marry, they must make the bed they lie on. "But why," Mrs. Stansfield asks, "should I be compelled to do the manual work of my house any more than do thousands of other married women who employ cooks, housemaids, and nurses?" She, like the woman of the cotton mill, is enabled by her earnings to employ a housekeeper. "I invite those who say that the home suffers to visit mine." But Mrs. Stansfield is a mother. "The sacred claims," etc. The lady tells us with pride and happiness of "two children whose birth necessitated some months' leave of absence, no more than the breakdown in health to which all, single and married, men and women, are alike liable. During the last thirteen years I can thankfully say I have not been absent from school half a day on account of my own children." To any who maintain that the children of married teachers suffer, she offers to introduce her son of fifteen (who is a Boteler scholar in the Sixth Form at the Warrington Grammar School), and her daughter of eighteen (who has just won an open scholarship at Oxford). Mrs. Stansfield further points out the penalisation of marriage involved in the proposal made by the authorities, and the loss to education involved by the removal from its service of the experience, the influence, and the motherly sympathy of married teachers. The present moment, evidencing

as it does a quickened sense on the part of women of the need to protest against injustice, is held by the Education Authorities to be ill-chosen for pressing the marriage disqualification. As a result of the agitation, Mrs. Stansfield and the other married teachers are to be allowed to remain at their posts—*for the time being.*

A second illustration of the sort of thing that is opening women's eyes is offered by the case of a girl journalist employed to write regularly for a London daily paper of enormous circulation. She did this satisfactorily, and was paid £3 a week. A young man journalist was employed to write on the same paper, and to supervise a certain page, at £15 a week. He had several people working under him. One of these underlings was presently discharged. The £3 a week girl was put into his place. She did her own work and the discharged man's still at £3. She was presently told that she was to familiarise herself as thoroughly as possible with the entire work on that page as the head of the department, the £15 a week man, might be going away. She obeyed. In due course the £15 man vanished. The £3 girl carried on his work. No complaint from the editor. No sign of the return of the £15 man. He may have been engaged in cursing the tendency of women to undersell.

Finally, when the last of the underlings for that department was dismissed, and the girl found herself carrying it on single-handed, she asked for a rise of salary. She was treated to an odious scene, was accused of having "a swelled head"—and was told

there were five hundred girls waiting who would be enraptured to take the post on the terms that she found fault with.

She knew this was true. But she also knew that none of the five hundred had the threads of the work in their hands. She refused to back down, and at last was given a rise of £2, with a solemn warning against her ever presuming to ask for more.

It is probable the overworked, underpaid girl was not the only sufferer here. The £15 man no doubt had his view of the significance of this story.

To solve the difficulty it will not be enough merely to organise the women journalists. Even the more desirable measure of organising men and women journalists will not be enough. For the old conception of the difference between the market value of women's work as compared with men's is so persistent that it is probably necessary for a while yet that the instinct of greed should give us ocular proof of the equal value of much of the work the two sexes do. Private employers will not be ashamed of paying a girl £8 for £15 worth of work while the Government is not ashamed to take precisely the same amount and quality of work from women, as in the Post and Telegraph Offices, and pay them less than men because, being voteless, the women cannot make their sense of the injustice an inconvenience to those responsible for its continuance.

4. Why will well-bred girls, as well as older women, sell Suffrage papers in the streets, go about as sandwichmen, and suffer the scant civility of the police and the horseplay of rowdies?

I have no experience of this myself, but I have cause to know that many a sensitive woman has set herself this task out of sympathy with the far more wounding experiences many of the workers in this Cause go through. Women who have not gone to prison, and have little or no money to give, give this particular service. It is in certain cases costlier than prison is in others. But the Suffragist who sells papers, or advertises meetings in the streets, does not I think, often realise that besides bearing witness to her faith and earning a few shillings for a particular society, she is contributing no small share to doing away with the European equivalent for the Eastern woman's veil, i.e. that shrinking from publicity which has been elevated into a virtue and which has so powerfully aided men in preserving their sex-dominance. So well have women been drilled in the idea that it was undesirable and dangerous for them to do work in public (save as ministrants to pleasure), that we are no longer struck by the difference in what is connoted by the word "public" as applied to the two sexes. To say of a person he is "a public man" is to assert his honourable eminence. To say "a public woman" is to say the worst you can.

Since the days when Andromache confessed to Hecuba:

> "All that men praise us for,
> I loved for Hector's sake, and sought to win.
> I knew that alway, be there hurt therein,
> Or utter innocence, to roam abroad
> Hath ill report for women; so I trod
> Down the desire thereof, and walked my way
> In mine own garden . . ."

—from that day to this the woman who tarries in the public street has been a target for the marksmanship of men. Women have greatly feared these slings and arrows. They still fear misapprehension of their motives. By mastery of that fear decent women are doing their share towards making the streets a less unfit place for decent women. A chapter could be written about "why," but that is not my business here.

5. Why are women ready to accept the alienation of many of their friends and most of their menfolk?

Not only because certain women have come to see that the average man is unable as yet to realise the injustice women suffer under, or that he is unable to realise that such injustice can and must be abolished. The woman accepts alienation not because she no longer cares for men's opinions, and not solely because she sees that a temporary alienation may be unavoidable.

There are in operation two subtler reasons than these. The first is the growing spirit of loyalty which makes a woman ashamed to side with the stronger party, from whom she stands (and all the world knows she stands) to gain such obvious advantages, whether in the field of business or of sentiment. The second reason she accepts this alienation is because she is beginning to recognise woman's own share in the responsibility for men's blindness. She knows how it has been fostered by woman's slavish desire at all hazards to please. That old vice must go. It will die the sooner for

men's learning, as soon as may be, that there are women ready to suffer not only in material advantage, but in friendship and affection, if their doing so can make the position clearer, and so shorten the difficult days that lie between us and a better understanding.

Of all the sacrifices women lay on the altar of the new faith, none perhaps costs so much as the alienation from friends. Only the unintelligent will continue long to mistake the sacrifice for sex-antagonism.

6. Why, instead of petitioning, are women now demanding justice?

Not only because petitioning has been tried and has failed. But because women now see that by petitioning they kept alive a misapprehension already too old. It is misleading to beg for a thing that no man has a moral right to withhold.

7. Why, instead of helping as before to elect another "Member" (pledged to go to Parliament and support Woman Suffrage), are women going themselves, in hundreds, "to knock at the doors of the House"?

Because so many men sent there in times past to work for Woman Suffrage have been either won over afterwards by the more clamant voices of voters to give precedence to voters' interests; or else the Woman Suffrage candidate, once elected, became hypnotised by the routine of the House, and by the growing sense of the helplessness of the private Member. Since realising the necessity of reminding legislators of unkept promises to women, women have gone to Westminster to do the "reminding" in an effectual way. They have also

gone there as a sign to the Government that the stewardship of the unjust steward is gravely menaced.

8. Why, rather than promise to abandon a dangerous and often health-destroying agitation, have hundreds of women gone to prison?

Because, of the two parties of Suffragists, those who want the vote in the dim and speculative future, and those who want it now—the militant Suffragists belong to the latter group.

It was Mazzini, I think, who pointed out how often the way to reform has lain through prison. But this truth was not in the minds of the first Suffragists who went forward by that road. Not the farthest-sighted of them all had any prevision of the moral awakening, the new birth of Faith, the passion of comradeship born of pain—no glimpse of the direct good destined to come through prison was given those women who first adopted the so-called "militant tactics." They simply did the nearest duty with all their might—considering only the end, resolute not to mind how rough the road thither.

They appealed in the open streets for followers. In leading the new attack on the oldest and most powerful of the citadels of wrong, they asked the help of women and of girls. With what looked like insane ignorance of human nature, before the "weak" and "timid" horde they unfurled a strange new flag, inscribed:

Through Evil Report to Honour!
Through Prison to Freedom!

Then the miracle happened. Instead of flying

forthwith from leadership like this, a legion rallied. They followed into dark unlikely places. Once there, the timid and the weak found an inexplicable new power. It enabled them to show steadfast faces, and to feel no fear in their hearts.

Much talk was in the air of armaments and military duty. The rapidly growing army of women came to look upon themselves as soldiers enlisted in a Holy War. Here for the first time were women banded together (as men had been so often), ready to make any sacrifice so they might be freed from an evil yoke. And above all, to do what they could to this end, *now*. In the eyes of these new soldiers women's belauded patience had been the undoing of the race. Patience was a comfortable vice—vile when practised at others' cost.

You may not approve these women, but they have made Woman Suffrage a living issue.

9. Why, if so-called "militant tactics" are good tactics, were they not employed before? It may be argued that they are good precisely because they are employed only after other means have failed. They say (I do not know upon how good authority) that a young Suffragist being interrupted in the middle of her speech at a mass meeting by the question: If these methods are advancing the Cause, why had they not been tried earlier? answered briskly, "Because I was at school." There is more than audacity in the retort.

This is pre-eminently a young woman's crusade. I have not met but one older woman in the movement who does not get her strongest conviction of

its not too distant triumph out of the fact that the Cause has won the young to its support.

We have at last enlisted those without whom none of the battles in the ancient or the modern world would have been fought. Who, after all, make up the armies? The young. Who won Marathon? The youth of Greece. Agincourt, Waterloo, Gettysburg? The young. A distinguished survivor of the Civil War told me the average age of his brothers in arms was seventeen to eighteen years. Read the inscriptions on the stones, rank on rank, in Federal or Confederate burying-grounds. You will say to yourself: How young these soldiers were—"mere boys."

So with our soldiers, the mere girls. It is the younger generation that is at the door. And with their coming naturally some modification of method. Henceforth not only talking and writing—Deeds, not words.

But deeds more rational and less destructive than those that men have employed in the lesser Revolutions. At least that is what we hope—we onlookers. I do not mean to disguise the fact that those who, like myself, believe war to be a survival of barbarism, are accustomed to think of physical violence, not in women only, but in men, as a recrudescence of the ape and tiger instinct that has been responsible for the thousand failures of humanity to attain a true civilisation. I shall not deny that some of us found the stones thrown by women stones of stumbling. Therefore, precisely we should bear witness to the fact that when we came to

understand how little the stones meant violence, and how much they meant moral indignation against the abuse of physical force, we were able to see in them the instruments not of destruction but of building. For the stone-throwers thought as straight as they aimed. They saw themselves confronted by the plain question: Which do you care most for, order or justice? They cared most for justice.

I have heard Suffragists complain that they have had to apologise for these women. I do not know how they have dared to do that. For, however unpalatable, the truth is that, to the so-called militant women, the evils that other women bear are more intolerable than they are to the rest of us. These militant women are the women who cannot sleep in their comfortable beds as we do in ours, knowing the wrong that walks abroad. Those of us who do not openly aid and abet these women may at least speak humbly of a devotion greater than our own.

10. And now I am come to the last question, which I may be held to have already tried to answer: "Why, after all, do women want the vote?" And yet I shall not have presented the case unless I add one word upon this final count.

There is no use in writing at this time of day about Woman Suffrage without writing frankly—or as nearly so as is possible to a woman born in the days when frankness about the things that matter was so discouraged that in most of us it either died young—or lived on maimed and halting. So then to be frank in so much—let us give fair-minded people

some final measure of the distance we have travelled, and the point at which we have arrived, by admitting what passes through the mind of many a quiet, home-keeping, non-militant woman in England to-day, on being asked this last question on my list of "Why?"

It would be erroneous to suppose that the Suffragist who is called on to recapitulate her reasons for desiring the vote is pleased with her task, or flattered at being asked her opinion. She is primarily conscious of an emotion of anger. She says to herself: I am called on at this time of day to defend our demand for a share in the higher gains of civilisation.

That is what it comes to. She remembers that the case for Woman's Suffrage has been before the reading world for a hundred years. It has been an organised public movement for half a century. Yet most of the legislators who would withhold the franchise make no effort to familiarise themselves with the growing body of literature reflecting women's views on the subject, nor will they take the trouble to acquaint themselves with the long record of quiet (too quiet?) propaganda. A member of the present Cabinet asked me, in an interval when there was no by-election to enlighten him, why the Suffragists did not hold meetings. One society alone had held throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom over a thousand Suffrage meetings in the preceding month. The Cabinet Minister had not heard of these meetings. They had been quite orderly, and the Press will not report women's political meetings unless something sensational happens.

Meanwhile, men in high places continue to advise "quiet propaganda" to women whose friends have grown grey practising quiet methods, to women who know what delay means to wives and mothers in the Potteries, to the shop-girl forced on the streets, to the pallid army of workhouse children.

The time has gone by when men can hope to win gratitude from public-spirited women by legislative scratching at the surface of the wrongs that women bear.

Those men who hope to turn the tide of women's resentment at being forcibly prevented from lifting a voice about their own affairs—those men who would tinker at Factory Acts, and Children's Bills, without finding out how these changes are regarded by women—light-hearted legislators undertaking these tasks would be waked from their vain dream of doing this work acceptably, could they know the feeling that seizes on women at men's daring to think themselves qualified to decide such questions without consulting those chiefly concerned.

During the debates upon the Children's Bill the helpless ignorance of their subject, on the part of men dealing with the issues raised, was not lost on the women who, with expert knowledge, sat behind the grille listening, impotent, while the all too limited time was wasted in argument about what might be held good for a child of three. What did a creature of three require? What, after all, was a creature of three like? They sat and solemnly debated.

In the end women were obliged to supplement

privately the legislators' wholly inadequate knowledge. Women were obliged by cumbrous and roundabout ways to protest against, and contrive to get recast, the clause relative to the evils of "overlaying," as well as other provisions in the Act inspired by the ignorance of its framers.

But I will not pretend for a moment that, if all such abuses were done away with to-morrow, there would not still remain, in the mind of many a woman, a sense of the obligation she is under to take her portion of the responsibility (which she shares morally with man) for the ordering of the world. He is incapable of doing her work for her. But even if the task were not beyond his competence, it would still be her business and not his.

And so it is that being asked why she thinks she would like to vote, the natural woman behind her mask of custom is conscious of a stirring of indignation not always consonant with the sober setting forth to which she is invited. But there is significance, there may be light in this heat—all the more that some of the women I speak of have no personal reason for discontent. Some of them have no shadow of a shade of grievance against their individual destiny. They are women for whom life has been so full and so rewarding, that possession of the vote would mean to them, personally, no more than a new obligation. Among others, the women I mean are those for whom Cicely Hamilton speaks in that brave and original book, "Marriage as a Trade," when she says: "To no man, I think, can the world be quite as wonderful as it is to the woman

now alive who has fought free." The women I mean are of equal fortune with those who formerly ran off with their good luck as a dog does with a bone, growling if any ventured near to claim a share.

To-day thousands of women who live out of the danger and dust of the battle—the secure and happy, as well as the sweated and the fiercely struggling—are conscious of this impulse of anger at hearing, *à l'heure qu'il est*, that there are men in the world fair-minded and not ungenerous, who can be supposed to want to know "why" women want the vote.

Tell us, rather, why men think themselves fitter to judge of our needs than we? Tell us how, without inextinguishable laughter, men can imagine themselves to be the sole repositories of wisdom.

TIME TABLE

DECEMBER, 1909—MAY, 1910

A REVIEW of the fourth year of activity on the part of the Women's Social and Political Union showed that a campaign fund, which at the end of 1908 stood at £26,000, had risen at the end of 1909 to £60,000. The salaried staff, increased by twenty-three, now numbered ninety-eight. The work, which in its early stages had been carried on in a small back room in a Chelsea lodging-house, was directed now from head-quarters (consisting of twenty-one rooms) at Clement's Inn, and extended by means of branches established throughout the kingdom. The official organ of the Union, "Votes for Women," was enlarged and had reached a circulation of 30,000.

In addition to the immensely increased activities of various other Suffrage Societies, new and old, the W.S.P.U. had held over 20,000 meetings during the year. Three times the Union had filled the great Albert Hall. Forty meetings had been held in the Queen's Hall; more than that number in the St. James's Hall. At the largest halls in the principal provincial towns crowded audiences had carried a resolution calling upon the Government to pass a Bill admitting women to the franchise.

No official notice was taken of the widespread peaceful propaganda. The only attention given officially to the great body of Suffragists was accorded to those who, in pressing their claims, came in conflict with the laws; laws which, as the Militants held, did not logically apply to taxpayers who were denied representation.

During the year three deputations were refused a

hearing by the Prime Minister. There had been 294 women arrested, 168 imprisoned; 110 Hunger Strikes and 86 cases of forcible feeding. Ninety-four women had pleaded the right of the subject to petition. Two of these cases, Mrs. Pankhurst's and Mrs. Haverfield's, were isolated for the purpose of testing the principle. Their counsel, Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Henlé, contended that if there was a right to petition the Prime Minister (whether as Prime Minister or as a Member of Parliament), then there must be an obligation on the part of the Minister, or the Member of Parliament, to receive that petition.

The Lord Chief Justice agreed as to the right to present a petition to the Prime Minister. He even said that petitions to the King *should* be presented to the Prime Minister. But upon a quibble he disallowed any obligation upon Mr. Asquith to receive a petition presented in person—an obligation which even kings (before these duties were undertaken by their Ministers) had not ventured to deny. But in 1909 the ancient Bill of Rights of the British people was cancelled, in so far as it related to women whose petition was known to deal with their political disability—though a better ground for petition than taxation without representation history does not reveal.

In any case, that " way out " was tried too, and was seen to be barred.

A vigorous anti-Government policy had been carried on at by-elections by the W.S.P.U., and was continued during the next General Election, which was fought on the issue of the Lords' Power of Veto, but the question of Woman Suffrage was also kept well before the public mind.

The opening of the year 1910 saw the Liberals returned to office greatly shorn of their previous strength, and saw the Suffrage agitation entering a new phase.

Officials of the various Suffrage bodies were now approached by friends, in and out of Parliament, in an

attempt to establish some common ground upon which to found a united effort to get a Suffrage Bill, in all its stages, through Parliament during the current session.

The great labour entailed by this enterprise was undertaken by Mr. Brailsford as Secretary of the Conciliation Bill Committee, whose Chairman was Lord Lytton.

Although at first very doubtful of the issue, the W.S.P.U.—under great pressure and in the act of framing plans for continued militancy—were brought to agree that, at the beginning of a new Parliament, the Government should be given a fresh chance to deal fairly by women.

Other Suffragists were so full of confidence in the new situation that in February, 1910, the directors of the policy of the militant Union were prevailed upon to declare a truce.

The two-edged weapon of militancy was not abandoned, but laid aside, in the hope that those were right who said it had served its purpose and was no more needed.

One of the early acts of the new Home Secretary, Mr. Winston Churchill, wore a conciliatory air. There were Suffragists still in prison when Parliament met, and the embarrassment of the late Home Secretary, under the test heroically applied by Lady Constance Lytton, threatened to find a parallel. Mr. Churchill was obliged to face questions in the House of Commons as to the legality of directing a stream of ice-cold water upon a prisoner by means of a hose-pipe introduced through the window of her cell; and as to the assault upon and the frog-marching of another prisoner. Responsibility for these cowardly deeds against defenceless women was speedily disavowed by Mr. Churchill—yet he refused to punish their perpetrators or those in authority over them. He had "no control over the appointment of prison justices," he said. But Home Office control of His Majesty's prisons was newly emphasised by Mr. Churchill's announcement of a new set of Penal Regulations. There was to be a distinction drawn in future

between prisoners guilty of crime implying moral turpitude and—other prisoners. No one needed to be told who these other prisoners were, solicitude for whom had led to special legislation. Already certain abuses made public by militant ex-prisoners had been amended. Indeed, the first great material good reaped from the going to prison of women of character was that gaols were made less unfit for human beings of any sort. In addition to other improvements, iron bedsteads had superseded the plank, earthenware plates had replaced dirty tin, and some measure of ventilation (other than that obtained by breaking glass) had been provided in the form of sliding panes. Further changes recommended by the new Home Secretary had to do with the treatment of the ordinary female prisoner between sixteen and twenty-three. She was to be taught dressmaking, etc., and a committee of visiting ladies were to try to find her work on her release.

The new tendency in legislation betrayed a growing uneasiness in the law-maker touching persons who had formerly been given little or no thought. The tendency referred to synchronised with the rise and spread of the militant movement.

But the legislator, although acquiescing more or less grudgingly in the new compulsion, made little advance in the direction of consulting women experts as to the needs of their own sex. The result was that, with the best intentions, legislators were as likely to harm women as to benefit them—a danger emphasised in the threatened attempt to deprive married women of the right to work outside their homes. A Cabinet Minister, speaking at Leeds, had said that women's factory work, especially married women's work, must be enormously curtailed. Should this high-handed measure be carried, thousands of women in the textile trade alone would have been thrown out of work and many a home impoverished. Yet the Government was said to be already instituting inquiries among employers as to the number of married

women who were working for them. Another indication of the close relationship between economic and political freedom was offered in a different walk of life. A movement was on foot to prevent the appointment of any married woman as teacher in the schools.

XI

SHALL WOMEN WORK?[1]

Given as a lecture at St. James's Hall, London, and elsewhere. Printed in the "Metropolitan Magazine," New York, and in the "Fortnightly Review," London.

THERE are probably a good many people inclined to think that the question, "Shall Women Work?" has been decided in the affirmative, once for all, by the pressure of modern life.

But nothing in this world is finally settled that is not settled for the good of the world.

Those who think there is no longer any serious difference of opinion about women's working should be reminded of the people (more numerous and more influential than we may like to admit) who are convinced it is *not* for the good of the world that women should work.

Now, if people who represent that opinion are unable to bring about what they hold will be a better state of society, they can at least retard the day which many people are trying to hasten—the day when women will be as free to work as men are.

I stop a moment to deny that it is woman's physi-

[1] Copyright in U.S.A. by E. Robins, 1909.

cal weakness that makes question of her fitness for work. She is the drudge of the world. She sweats over all the cooking-stoves of Christendom. She is a pit lassie in the north. She is an agricultural labourer in the south. She makes bricks and bicycles in the Midlands. In Germany she is still harnessed alongside a dumb beast and drags a loaded cart.

I think we won't question her physical capacity—though I have wondered why, when people discuss her staying-power, no one seems to remember her record in a profession where (though she is necessarily hard-worked) she has long been well treated and well paid. Anyone who knows the life of the stage knows it is an arduous one. Yet there are thousands of girls and women (not chosen as being the most robust of their sex) who are able to play long, exhausting parts night after night, ten months at a stretch, throughout a lifetime. I have known women do that in America, where, in addition to the strain of such journeys as no actress makes in England, the custom was, not only to play on Sunday (as well as other days), but to play twice, making ten performances a week. Even in many first-class companies there was not always an understudy for the leading lady. She was expected never to be ill—never to fail her manager. She did not fail him. I never knew a theatre closed on her account unless, being a star, she could consult her own mere convenience.

I do not deny that the new generation of hockey-playing, out-of-door girls will have far more strength and infinitely better chances than we had. But even

the old-fashioned sort of woman got through too much sustained hard work for fair-minded people to say she hasn't the strength to work. Whether it is good for her is another matter. Before dealing with our main question, let us inquire:

Firstly: *Is work a good or an evil thing?*

Secondly: *Is it specially injurious for women to work on the same terms as men?*

Thirdly: *What is the connection, if any, between women's wages and women's franchise?*

Now, as to the essential good or evil of work. The more closely one looks into that matter, the more clear it seems that the old curse upon work was really levelled against overwork, or against work under evil conditions. The independent people, even the excessively rich, sometimes work. They sometimes overwork. Nobody in all the labour world has worked harder than the great artists—unless it be certain self-made millionaires. Why do such people work hard? Because their work interests them, fascinates them, makes all so-called recreation a labour and a penance.

Nature starts us all fair in this great enterprise. We begin life thinking very gallantly about work. When first we come across it, it has so few terrors for us we call it by the gayer name of play. "Let everything be done to building," says the Apostle. The principle is the same whether the building be visible or invisible. Now, every little boy and girl alive agrees with St. Paul as to the paramount necessity for building.

The child builds his house of blocks for joy. The

man building later might have no less joy. We all know men with whom the passion for building has not lessened, but grown with their growth. Most of us remember the rapture of the tool-box. There are people of ripe age in the world who have had to work a lifetime with their brains, and are not yet cured of that first joy of working with their hands. I know a little girl who has playthings enough for a dozen; wax dolls, expensive mechanical toys. Two things give her most pleasure. One is alive; it is a cat. The other is a little rack of housewife's implements; small brooms, brushes, a dustpan, a dust-cloth. Seventeen men and women servants in that house where she lives call the use of similar implements "work." The child finds no play such good fun as imitating what she sees them do. A little boy, overcome by the fascinations of the long-haired hearth-brush, was ready to do battle for exclusive use of it. My point is: the joy those fortunate children feel has no real need to die. One of the things we most pity the poor for is that in them the joy of work has been killed so early. By nature we all, men, women, and children alike—all who are born healthy and live unperverted—have a sense of joy in making something. The sick, the old, the sweated—they are the ones who shrink. Not to have to work? Why, it is the ideal of the superannuated servant—the poor soul, who, though giving up "service," cannot give up the servile mind.

For the masters of the world to have to give up work is humiliation; it is acceptance of defeat.

But this thing that is so prized by the freest and

most gifted among men is not good, some say, for women; or good only in modified, sternly restricted form—like certain poisons.

The effect is bad, we are told, in answer to the second of my questions, unqualifiedly bad, where women work on the same terms as men. Some of these would-be reformers value woman so highly that they cannot abide the notion of her working for a living on any terms. Instead of giving better opportunities for wage-earning, they would see poor women (above all, poor married women) legislated out of such liberty as they now possess.

Of the suggestion recently made in this direction by the President of the Local Government Board, I may as well confess at once, many women find it difficult to speak quite patiently. And they are the same women who feel so strongly that mothers should have the best conceivable opportunity to do well by their children, that they would not leave this supreme consideration to the tender mercies of modern industrialism.

Now what is it the President of the Local Government Board proposes? That the State should help poor married women to give the State worthy citizens? Oh, no. He proposes merely that the earning power of a certain class shall be destroyed by Act of Parliament.

You might think that poor mothers went out to work, as a person goes to a public-house, for recreation or oblivion. But that is to misunderstand the matter.

Even to the women of wider cultivation, of many

interests—women who have had happy experience away from home, in the world's wide playground—to the majority even of those women there is nothing so interesting, so absorbing, as their children. We have all heard people complain of the less self-critical mother making a bore of herself to other folk by her tendency to narrow down all life to the limits of the nursery. It is only by an effort she remembers that little Lucy's charms, and little Tommy's precocities, are not as engrossing topics to all men as they are to her.

A woman of the world, without children, but not without wisdom, said to me last Christmas: "When I want to give my contemporaries real joy I invite them to come and watch their children at a party." That woman understood human nature. The instinct she so justifiably appealed to is intensified in the poor woman. She has little outlet for either thought, or action, except in her home. To the woman threatened by this new tendency in legislation her children are society; her children are story-books; they are drama and pictures, poetry and ambition, and all the future. Now what is it that drives a poor woman to turn her back on all that, and to sit, day in day out, turning a wheel in a mill?

Legislators must be made to realise that the instinct urging women of that sort out of their homes is a very precious thing. Perhaps it is the most precious thing in nature. There are those who say it is the corner-stone of civilisation, for it is the instinct to lift up the standard of life. In women the most common expression of that impulse is the at-

tempt to do the best for the children. Those working women, to whom the President of the Local Government Board would presume to teach their maternal duty, have no perverted passion for factory or mill. Their passion is to keep a roof over the family, better food on the table, warm clothing on the children, a little store for the inevitable sickness, a more decent standard of home-keeping for ill-paid husband and all. Are these hard-driven women to be denied the right to choose between the greater evil of semi-starvation and the lesser evil of confiding their young children to an older child, or, as often happens, to the grandmother, or to someone incapacitated for work out of the home? Does some gentleman in the Cabinet—does any man anywhere—care more about the welfare of those children than their mother? Let *her* decide which of the two evils is the greater.

For, what Mr. Burns proposes is not really that poor mothers should not work. He, better than most men in Parliament, knows that the last thing to be tolerated in a labourer's wife would be her not working. Mr. Burns would forbid her being paid for work —that's all.

In the factory the woman works for stated hours at stated tasks, easily learned, mechanical; and for that receives the few shillings that make all the difference to the little home—between being pinched and being fairly comfortable. At the factory she does one woman's work and is paid for it. At home she is not paid at all, and is expected to fill the offices of half a dozen women. Not for certain hours only,

but uninterruptedly from dawn till dark (and through much of the night, if the children are young or there is sickness), the wageless mother does the work of nurse, cook, housemaid, seamstress, charwoman, and laundress; and for all that her reward may be to see her children go hungry. No; paradox as it sounds, those women must be allowed to work in order not to overwork.

But let us be fair. Let us confess that the President of the Local Government Board is not alone in his superficial thinking on the subject.

We have heard even good Suffragists—I recall one very influential—who has been heard to say: "I want a vote in order that I, and others like-minded, may help on legislation against woman's working outside her own home, so that she shall devote herself to her children."

You would suppose, to hear these people talk, that two things were inevitable:

First, that every woman must have children to see to.

Second, even if we agree to confine our attention strictly to the women with children, we are asked to go farther. We are asked to suppose that these children never, never grow up!

There is, apparently, no use in saying to such folk that, on the one hand, not every woman has children, and that, on the other, in spite of love and care, some women's children die. No! the bereaved mother, the childless widow, and the incorrigibly maiden—they none of them deserve to be considered. Away with them!

The mind of reformers such as these is stamped indelibly—is wholly engrossed by the picture of the woman with the child at her breast. I am as ready as my neighbour to admit the beauty and significance of that picture. But it is mere thoughtless sentimentality to wish to legislate for all women at all times of their lives, as though the Madonna picture represented the static, the only possible aspect of the adult woman; as though the years that lead up to that beautiful moment, and the years that lead onward, after the child has grown out of the mother's arms—as though all the rest of life were of no consequence to the mother and of no account to society.

The more scientific presumption seems to be that the mother will fare better, and the child will fare better when motherhood resumes its ancient place—not made the super-specialised function which, as at present (partly on account of that very super-specialisation), is a function often very poorly carried out. Motherhood is not, as the weaklings would have us believe, a kind of malady. It is one of the conditions of health. In certain tribes still upon the earth, living much in the open air, nomadic, close to nature, the woman has been known to fall out of the ranks of the migrating group, to lie down by the wayside, and give birth to a child, to rise up in an hour or two, and, with the infant in her arms, appear that same evening in the camp of her people. One does not quote that as an ideal, except of health—of the woman's freedom from the valetudinarian view of her great, wholesome office.

The fact that needs to be emphasised is that, if it

lives, the youngest child grows up. In the minds of those persons obsessed by an idea of the difficulty, the danger, and the all-devouring preoccupation of the maternal task, no child ever grows up. The mother's life must be absorbed by it, not only for a few years, but for ever.

Now, in this country, more and more, marriage is postponed. In the great middle class, more and more, women do not marry till close upon, in many cases not till after, thirty. From the point of view of the race good and the individual good, I regard this as regrettable. But we are dealing with these conditions as we find them.

Is a woman, then, to do nothing with the eager and vigorous years until she marries, except look out for a husband? If she does not marry till she is thirty there will only be an average of ten or twelve years out of her whole life, during which she may be bearing children and ministering to their infant needs, till the time comes when the youngest, the last, is out of her arms. At the beginning of middle life even the woman with children finds that for many hours of every day, if not (as in the great middle class) for most months of the year, the children are not only out of her arms; they are out of the house; they are at school. But certain reformers don't know this. They think the children are all still wailing on the maternal breast.

As a matter of fact, the mother has come to the time of life when she is less preoccupied by private concerns than ever before. And in many ways she is better equipped. Her sympathies are broadened.

Her judgment has ripened. Her intelligence is at its keenest. She has gone long enough upon that adventure we all embark upon as children—the finding out what the world is like, and, most pressing quest of all, in the beginning what one's self is like. At forty odd she knows the answer to a number of questions. At last she understands the game. Now it is in this phase of her life that for a certain type of man (I don't say for all, but, let us say, for most legislators) the woman has ceased to have any interest or any meaning, unless in her narrowest family relation to himself. Yet the average woman whose children are launched, the woman with her garnered knowledge and her disciplined soul, has reached the time when, if never before, she should be of use outside her immediate home circle. She has discharged only one share of her race debt, if she has accepted the usual destiny. With that rich possession for her background and her enlightenment, there she is!—arrived (as women confess to one another—half afraid of cheap sneers if openly they admit it), arrived at the securest, the least unwise, the serenest, in many ways the best part of her life. What is she to do with it?

Nothing. Or things so petty they make a mock of human worth. She is to sit with folded hands till her grandchildren give her back some pale reflection of her one permitted task. This is a part of the monstrous waste that goes on in the world. If woman is legislated for at all, it is but to emphasise the fact, not that she is one of the world's two halves, but that she is "the sex," as the eighteenth-century gallant used to put it. For the legislator, too, woman is all sex.

We may remember in this connection that it has been made a reproach to us that women are so absorbed in sex matters. It is often quoted as a crowning instance of our unfitness for a share in the great affairs of State—in those high abstractions that occupy the minds of men. Yet what do we find? It is these nobler creatures—it is our pastors and masters—who are most determined to limit woman's experience to one order of activity.

There is, no doubt, a growing proportion of women who are not as convinced as, for instance, ex-President Roosevelt, of the superlative value to society of the large family. Perhaps those women descry improvement rather in the direction of small families, families in which the concern shall be quality rather than quantity.

There is no sort of difficulty in understanding why, in this age of congested industrialism, exploiters of labour wish to see large families the rule. There is no difficulty in seeing why, under a reign of militarism, the same call should be sounded. But neither to fill the factories nor the ranks of armies does the civilised woman exist.

There was once a man before whom all Europe trembled, who said that the greatest woman in France was she who had given birth to the most children. But it was this same Napoleon who gave death to more of the children of women than any one being of modern time. It was the man whose hand lay very heavy on women in other ways—the man who set down in his famous Code the law forbidding to the unmarried mother even the attempt to establish the paternity of her child.

When we get to the bottom of the question, we find that what the law-makers mean by "woman shall not work" is: woman shall be restricted to one sort of work. We say: "Let her decide."

You may safely let her decide, for the work people wish to make compulsory is the work she loves best. But not till she undertakes it freely shall we have a race of human beings as uniformly healthy, happy, and comely as a flock of wild birds.

Absolutely the only way to ensure woman's undertaking her great task freely—at Nature's bidding rather than at necessity's—is to give the woman economic independence. Let no one oppose that ideal, and be allowed unchallenged to say he has the good of the world at heart. So long as women get their living by one order of activity only, so long will some women get their living illegitimately. As Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman so wisely says: "All the social-purity societies put together do not equal the trade school as a preventive of vice."

Even the most selfish must presently see what is bound up in this question of women's economic independence. Society is a unit. Evil done in the dark comes to light in the injury done to family life. The wrongs of obscure hard-driven women are avenged on the women in high places—yes, and on the men and on the children.

We would alter the old line that runs:

"For men must work and women must weep."

Men must work and women must work, or else both will have good cause for weeping.

We come now to my final question: What is the connection, if any, between women's wages and women's franchise?

Prof. Dicey and Mrs. Humphry Ward say there is no connection.

Well, let us see. To what, in the first place, do they attribute the fact that all over the world the question of woman suffrage is forcing its way to the forefront of practical politics?

If woman suffrage were merely a matter of abstract justice, we know we should not vote till the sons of women are all saints and sages.

Not even "Mrs. Pankhurst and her henchwomen" (as an agitated Liberal paper summed up the direst menace to the Government at the last Newcastle election), not even the founder of the Women's Social and Political Union and the inspired group she has gathered round her at Clement's Inn—not even they could win the vote by the utmost they might do, or say, or suffer.

If women had not already entered the industries and professions the cause of woman suffrage would not have advanced beyond the status of the pious opinion.

There were women long ago—yes, and men—who saw not alone the justice of this cause; they saw in it the salvation of society. But their vision did not prevail, could not prevail, for the reason that political independence is bound up with economic independence.

In modern society, so deeply involved are these two forms of liberty that until women had attained

some measure of one, it was useless for them to hope for the other. Political independence would not be so hard to win, nor so long in coming, if to get that sort of independence you were not obliged to have some measure of the other sort—though, to have a fair measure of either, you must have both. Not that it was necessary for woman to have economic independence before she was needed in public affairs, but that a certain number of the sex had to win economic independence before woman could show in any large and generally convincing way that she realised she was needed, and that she was, moreover, prepared to obey the call!

No single utterance from "the Suffrage side" has roused so much ire as the saying that women's wages will improve when they get the vote. The Anti-Suffrage Society has issued a leaflet pointing out Suffragist teaching upon this matter as perhaps their chief enormity, whereby they mislead the ignorant and the poor—especially at election times—playing upon their ignorance or their greed. It is this tenet of the suffrage creed that most annoys Mrs. Humphry Ward. It drives Prof. Dicey to such fury that he says anyone who preaches this faith is "either grossly ignorant, or may fairly be described as the knave of knaves." Well, why—thus warned—do we continue to say that wages and votes are intimately connected? Because it is true. And not only true, but demonstrably true. No Suffragist says that, by the mere dropping of a ballot paper into a hole, the little political machine will be set humming like a music box, and that, with a tinkle and a chink of

gold, sovereigns will straightway pour out in a stream. No! The Suffragist forms her calculations on a more reasonable basis. What is that basis? It is that the laws of economics—unlike Prof. Dicey—have no prejudice on the subject of sex.

Working women realise how stupid they would prove themselves if they were to ignore the object-lesson offered by the working man. Women are not dismayed by the fact that men have not yet (and by themselves) attained conditions absolutely ideal. It is something that since the working-man's entrance into practical politics *his* wages have risen—a rise—estimated by such an authority as Mr. Sidney Webb—at so amazing a rate as fifty per cent. Whether by so much, or by less, it is a matter of history that amelioration of the working-man's lot (undreamed of in '67 and '84) has kept pace with the broadening of the franchise. Women have watched the English Parliament at work, bringing about the most drastic of these changes. And why should we extract no meaning from the fact that in the Colonies conditions for both men and women wage-earners have been improved since women had the vote? Is it only out of England that good may be effected by wages boards? And if so, why are certain English politicians so eager to introduce them here? No one denies that the establishment of a minimum wage in other places has abolished the more flagrant forms of sweating. No one denies that this was a gain especially to women, for women—abroad as well as here, and always—are the first sufferers from exploitation.

But on this side of such large and enlightened measures (as are the glory of New Zealand, for instance) there are other economic advantages inherent in the vote. Women are not such childish thinkers as to suppose that the conditions of labour are not as important as the wage. They *are* the wage, rightly considered, for they are health and efficiency; they are "the wages of going on." But if we follow the course of English politics alone—I don't mean if we merely read a party newspaper, but if we hear something of all sides; above all, if we watch the forces at work (during an election, for instance)—we will not deny that legislation for the working man is largely conditioned by the voters' pressure upon their representatives in the Commons.

It has come within even my limited experience to have heard ten or twelve years ago a great employer of labour fulminate against the impudence, the rank impossibility of the Workmen's Compensation Act. "It would be the death of British industry."

Yet I lived not only to see that Act passed, but to hear that same great employer say: "Oh, it's fair enough."

Now who converted him? Not the economists. Not his brother capitalists. The working man converted him. Not by appeals. By the way he voted. As soon as it was clear that the working man meant to send to Parliament the candidate pledged to support that measure, just so soon compensation for men injured in work became "fair enough."

The poor man's point of view is not forgotten in

these days, for he is ably represented in the House of Commons. Even the most inarticulate—one would say, most helpless section of men—the unemployed—find friends in Parliament to plead their cause.

But if any body of human beings needed help above all others one might think it would be the unemployed women.

We have not forgotten how the public duty to those defenceless women was interpreted by the authorities. We might have supposed the awful plight of those women, facing starvation in mid-winter, presented every conceivable claim for speedy alleviation. No. Their plight presented every claim *save one*. Nobody was officially responsible for or to them.

But this, and similar neglect of women's most crying economic needs, is so familiar to all who care about the matter that I will give (very briefly) a single one among the many object-lessons offered us in America, just to show how little such things depend upon Cabinet *personnel* or upon any merely local conditions.

A woman teacher in a great public school in America instituted an inquiry a little while ago into the reason why, more and more, women teachers, qualified according to custom (by high record and time of service), failed to get promoted to head-mistress-ship. Right and left, on every side, men notoriously less well qualified were advanced over the women's heads. What did it mean? Were women, after being successful through many years—

were they failing all of a sudden in a profession which in America has become peculiarly the educated women's profession? (The well-equipped man gravitates to pursuits offering the greater prizes.) No one wanted to deny that a certain proportion of women candidates might deserve rejection, but why should this large percentage suddenly be said to have fallen below the standard? Why should even the women already in enjoyment of the better paid and more honourable posts—why should they, upon obscure or frivolous grounds, be set aside in favour of men? When thoroughly sifted, the matter turned out to be the simple one of votes. The great officials in the Education Department wanted to keep their lucrative offices. To do that meant a careful cultivation of votes. A headmaster was a vote. A headmistress was only a woman qualified to teach.

The Anti-Suffrage League denies the close connection between the vote and wages. Not so the practical politician who is against us. He opposes granting the vote on the precise ground that, when once women vote, they will insist upon, and they will ultimately achieve, economic independence.

And then the most dreadful things will happen. I have been reminded of that outcry of some years ago (most people have forgotten it, but there was an outcry) against women's bicycling. Bicycling was not only unladylike, it had the most dire physical results: it unfitted women to be mothers. Persons who, with that fear upon them, were deterred from a wholesome pleasure lived to see in the great sanatoriums a contrivance by means of which a woman too

weak and ailing to ride a bicycle, being mounted on a saddle, was put through an exercise which imitates as closely as possible the action and the effect of bicycle-riding! That exercise is now admitted to be at least innocuous, but exercise of the vote would upset women's delicate machinery beyond repair—so I was told the other day by a distinguished man of science, ornament of many learned societes, and one unlearned—the Anti-Suffrage Society. I quote him because he does not share the usual "anti" view. "Votes have nothing to do with wages? Stuff and nonsense," said this wearer of many honours, the holder of an enviable public post. "The reason," he said, "that women mustn't be allowed to vote is because, if they did, they'd be altogether too independent. Why, they'd be flooding the learned professions—competing with experts."

"But," I said, "that doesn't alarm you! Their flimsy, illogical minds, you know; their deficient brain weight." (His brain is enormous. But it seems to give him no sense of security.)

"No," he said; "the women would work and cram; yes—oh, they'd pass the examinations! And what next? They'd be wanting the best-paid places! *Getting them!*" I suppose I showed I could bear the thought of that, for he said: "You don't understand what's involved. Those women won't want to do their duty." I thought, in my innocence, he meant their duty by the fat offices they had filched from men. "No, no," he said; "I mean, they won't want to marry, those women!" I thought he was wrong, but he was a very learned person, and I didn't

like to contradict him. "No," he said angrily, "those women—*they'll prefer to enjoy themselves!*"

"But surely," I said, "married people are not all miserable."

"No," he said, "not at present."

But that was because the woman felt settled. If the man wasn't perfection, she just made the best of it. She had to! And great domestic peace had come out of that. But if the wife had a vote and could get a good living independently of her husband, the man would have always to be minding his p's and q's. If he didn't, the minute she didn't like something she'd be banging the front door!

So the only way to make a woman endure wifehood was to cut off all means of escape! No Suffragist *I* ever met thinks so ill of husbands. I told the great man it had been left for him to say quite the worst thing I had heard about matrimony.

There are always people ready to be in a panic lest Nature mayn't be strong enough to keep the race going. It is a delusion that only one-half of humanity can be excused for harbouring. Women smile at such a fear.

I should like to ask those men who think woman is developing a terrifying disposition to slave at intellectual tasks, and a mighty determination to excel away from home—I should like to ask men who fear the effect of that new tendency, to remember a fact or two. Taking into account the long story of the ages, women are new at earning distinction, except of one sort. Most women know what it is to be held

(at some time, by someone) an adept at the old task—the art of pleasing. But a very small proportion of the sex, as yet, knows the joy of winning independence by means of the better-paid professions. Remember how very new women are at that, and how very often they have been told they couldn't do it! One of the first medical women to receive her degree from a Scottish university was warned by an old doctor (her friend and helper) not to delude herself with the idea that because she had got her degree she was going to get a practice. "Why, some men find that hard enough! Remember!" he said grimly, "remember I warned you—by the time you're able to earn your bread you won't have teeth to eat it with." She earned her bread from the first year.

But women are still a little surprised and excited to find they can do these things. Give them time. When the doors of the professions, instead of being so jealously guarded—or opened, if at all, such a little crack that you must push and squeeze if you're to get through at all—when the doors are flung wide, only some women will go through them. And those who do will walk in orderlywise, not pressing and over-straining. The need for that will be no more.

And those that later go in with dignity and come out with honours, they will owe their dignity and their honours to the women who are fighting this hard and dusty fight for enfranchisement. The happy wives and mothers of the future, too, who stay at home, not because they can't do anything else, but because home is for them the best of all possible places, they, too, will owe their fuller measure of usefulness and of

content to the Suffragist, just as the Suffragist, in her turn, owes her power to the women who first forced the doors into the trades and the professions. To the woman teacher and to the medical woman, pre-eminently, our debt is incalculable. But every woman mill-hand, every little half-timer (though we hope to eliminate her)—every one of those wage-earning women, may walk her way proudly. She has had her share in the betterment of the world.

TIME TABLE

MAY–AUGUST, 1910

THE death of the King (in May, 1910) had a marked effect on the impending crisis between the two Houses of Parliament. The General Election which had seemed imminent was postponed. The leaders of the two great parties in the State agreed that an attempt should be made to compose their differences by conference.

In this rebirth of hope for a peaceful solution of political quarrels the Suffrage question shared. The Conciliation Bill was not a wholly satisfactory measure in the eyes of the Militants. It stopped short of the ideal of equal voting rights for men and women. It was a compromise agreed upon, after much labour of adjustment and prolonged discussion, by a committee composed of twenty-five Liberals, seventeen Conservatives, six Irish Nationalists, and six members of the Labour party, and it had for Suffragists of all creeds one prime recommendation. It was a measure which, in the opinion of members of Parliament, could be passed during that session. In this faith all the Suffrage societies found themselves not only working for a common end, but agreeing upon a common policy as the means of attaining their end.

No society worked harder in the interests of the Conciliation Bill than the W.S.P.U. From every Suffrage platform in the country the advantages of the Conciliation Bill were explained and advocated. Miss Christabel Pankhurst wrote in the Union paper, pointing out the unprecedented good fortune of having a Bill approved

by men of such widely differing political creed as the Liberal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey; the Tory ex-Minister, the Hon. Alfred Lyttelton; and the Chairman of the Labour party, Mr. Barnes. "Never before," said Miss Pankhurst, "has there been within the Commons so widespread and so influential a movement as this towards Women's Enfranchisement . . . members of all parties, men of the first political rank, working for the immediate concession of Votes for Women."

On June 14th, 1910, the Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Shackleton, and the first reading carried without a division. The Prime Minister was asked to promise facilities for the later stages. In the interval of waiting for this promise, memorials to the Prime Minister in favour of the Bill were signed by 189 members of Parliament, 800 doctors, by dignitaries of the Church, educationalists, and other eminent people. At countless meetings resolutions were passed and sent to Mr. Asquith. A monster procession of the united Suffrage societies, organised by the W.S.P.U., marched in thousands through London to a mass meeting at the Albert Hall. The overflow from that gathering could not be contained by the Kensington Town Hall. Never had Suffragists rallied publicly in such vast numbers as in support of the Conciliation Bill.

All the omens were set fair.

Mr. Asquith went so far as to receive a deputation of Suffragists of the Constitutional variety.

These events were very distressing to the Anti-Suffragists.

They appeared in a deputation of protest before the Prime Minister, and in other ways manifested their acute uneasiness.

XII

MR. PARTINGTON'S MOP

Printed in "Votes for Women," August 12, 1910

WHEN people opened their newspapers one morning last month they saw an article headed:

A £100,000 ANTI-SUFFRAGE FUND

Whatever the political faith of the reader, no one on seeing the names of the signatories to the fund could doubt that such persons would find the raising of £100,000 the lightest part of their undertaking.

For the promoters of Anti-Suffrage agitation are mainly men, and men of large means. Double the amount called for could have been raised without invoking other than the published list of supporters. No reader would doubt but what (since these gentlemen thought £100,000 ought to be raised) they had forthwith raised it. The announcement that only £18,000 had been subscribed came as an anti-climax. Yet we must suppose that the full sum will be forthcoming. The project is, financially speaking, so poorly mothered and so handsomely fathered, that it would be pardonable, in this instance, to accept the Anti-Suffrage doctrine of woman's negligible share in the question of Parliamentary

Franchise, were it not for the fact that these rich and powerful gentlemen are not ready themselves to subscribe the £100,000.

They want women to help them!

Now, how do they propose to persuade women to contribute money, time, and influence towards frustrating the determination of other women to take a share in the responsibilities of the nation?

Lord Cromer and his friends cannot reasonably ask their Anti-Suffragist ladies to go about arguing in public that women should keep out of public life.

If, however, casting logic to the winds, they should send women forth upon this errand, in every town and village up and down England these emissaries will encounter the Suffragists—a hundred to one of the Antis—women organised, practised, popular, tireless.

The Antis cannot hold the crowds against these trained speakers, they cannot hold their own in debate or in devotion, or in that passion of faith that makes a Suffragist more a Suffragist every day she lives. Even if the Anti women are sent out into the open, they will not long remain there. The chief Anti-Suffragist appeal will be made discreetly. A large portion of that £100,000 will be expended in sowing broadcast leaflets and articles.

Let us put ourselves in the place of a recipient of these printed appeals. Imagine a person who until now has been too indifferent, or too occupied, to follow either side of the argument.

Since not even the most leisured apostle would wish to waste time in preaching to the converted or the unconvertible, we will consider the case of the

person with open (or openable) mind, to whom propagandist literature is presumably addressed.

What is the initial impression made upon a reader of this description? It is that Anti-Suffragists set out to prove:

(1) That the Enfranchisement of Englishwomen would weaken if not ruin England.

(2) That a vigorous and widespread agitation for the Suffrage in the U.S.A. was quashed by a counter agitation on the part of American Anti-Suffragists.

(3) That what American Antis could do, English Antis must set themselves to accomplish.

Before the Open-Minded Novice goes the length of putting her hand in her pocket, or even so far as to rank herself with the Antis, she may want to examine the grounds for thinking that disaster would follow upon women's concerning themselves actively and directly with the affairs of State. All the more does that theory cry out for investigation in view of the fact that the Antis themselves urge women to take an active share in affairs of the municipality.

The Anti-Suffragist distinction is not clear. The line drawn between laudable and reprehensible activity is found, on examination, to be strangely arbitrary.

It amounts to this: Women must not vote for Members of Parliament because, if they did, some day the women in a majority might vote against a minority of men, who, although few, would be able (and ready!) to cudgel the women out of their position. Thus, since the women's vote would stand only for public opinion, the weak majority would be violently

swept aside by the superior physical force of the minority.

If this is an intelligent anticipation, it is as intelligent to anticipate such a state of things with regard to the municipality as in reference to the State. Yet no one seems to fear that if a majority of women were elected to some Board of Guardians, and the few brave men elected were to oppose a measure advocated by the majority of women, the result will be that gentlemen guardians will set to and beat the lady guardians.

The Antis talk of force as though all force worthy of the name was muscular. They profess little or no faith in the spiritual forces which we had thought were, in all civilised countries, the governing forces. The Antis seriously believe that we would all be at one another's throats, but for the police, backed by the Army and Navy. Nations still, they think, attain and maintain their ascendancy by physical force.

The Open-Minded Neophyte may not have forgotten that a few weeks ago fresh light was shed on the physical-force question by the black and white prize-fight in Nevada. Although inclined, like the Antis, to over-estimate the part played in the modern state by physical force, the majority of the American nation recognised that the only significance of the late contest lay in the exaggerated importance attached to it by the more ignorant and excitable among the negroes.

The spectacle of a white champion being hammered out of recognition by a burly black, instead of

illustrating to negroes the inherent savagery and stupidity of such a waste of force, is said to have fired the simpler souls with the notion that black Jack's victory showed his race the way to respect and power.

The intelligent observers in both races saw the matter differently. Odious as the Reno spectacle was, it probably served a good end. Instead of its fostering the old delusion as to the true ground of the white man's superiority, the Reno fight emphasised the fact that if physical force were indeed the bulwark of ascendancy, the white man need not look to bearing his burden long.

Happily the gains of the human race are guarded by subtler forces.

The Open-Minded Novice may suspect that this opinion is shared in private even by the Anti-Suffragist old gentlemen who, nevertheless, stand up in public and (with no sense of the irony of the situation) say to able-bodied young women that those who make the laws must also have the physical force to cause those laws to be obeyed.

Perplexity will descend upon the open mind with the first Anti-Suffrage manifesto, and will deepen to the last. The Novice will find more than one leaflet bitterly denouncing any measure of enfranchisement that might (however temporarily) leave out wives and mothers. The poor Novice had been trying to believe it a good thing to be left out! But she re-adjusts herself to thinking that somehow in spite of the vote being (in women's hands) an abomination, it is, nevertheless, a grievance and a public menace

that a Suffrage Bill should be considered which does not, at any cost, expressly provide votes for wives—on the new ground of a marriage qualification. No sooner has the Novice got that firmly into her head than she is told that any Bill which would give wives votes would mean the destruction of domestic peace!

To the Open-Minded One's further bewilderment she discovers that the outcry against any Bill that should exclude married women does not come from Suffragist wives and mothers, but from men, or from women who want to prevent women of any sort from voting.

Even a Novice may come to suspect that this solicitude about the married woman's vote has its parallel in the disingenuous plea that the Conciliation Bill is not sufficiently democratic.

For whom is the Conciliation Bill not democratic enough?

For the Labour party? No, the Bill is fathered by a Labour Leader and is supported by his party. The Bill is democratic enough for a Keir Hardie, but it is not democratic enough for a Churchill.

But suppose the Novice, who began her investigation open-minded, has now closed her mind. Suppose her convinced by some feeling, stronger than any logic, that she ought to help to do for England what Anti-Suffragists are said to have done for America. There is still the danger that she may look into that claim too. She will find easily accessible reprints of the English report of the great victory won by the Transatlantic Antis. Not nearly so accessible,

yet to be found in any file of "The Times," is the complete and authoritative refutation of that report.

The shut mind is like to gape again in amazement at discovering the steady advance of the Suffrage cause in America in the past three years, and that in the ferment of American franchise interests mightier forces are at work than any wielded by the handful of Anti-Suffragist ladies, unversed in practical politics, undisciplined in public life, helpless and negligible before the larger issues of the Transatlantic problem.

Should the inquirer not take time to learn the significance of such witness to the steady advance of the Suffrage faith in America as Jane Addams offers —the most confiding Novice is like to fall upon suspicion through the self-defeating partisanship of that great friend of the Antis, "The Times."

The romantic Anti version of the American situation has lately been reiterated in all the emphasis of unlimited space and large print, precisely as though on the highest authority that account of the matter had not been proved to be without foundation in fact.

"The Times" used formerly to print the refutations coming from instructed persons of high character. The Suffrage question has, it seems, grown too serious for continuance of the old usage. The latest authoritative contravention of "The Times'" report was denied insertion in its entirety. Even the summarised version of Miss Alice Stone Blackwell's expert evidence was dismissed in small type.

That was hardly fair. But such tactics of panic

will in the end serve the Suffragists rather than the Antis. To do this seems to be the fate of each new Anti-Suffragist device.

Even a Novice may see that the Suffrage cause in England has recently been given an immense lift by Lord Cromer and his friends. They achieved this by appealing to women for help to fight against their enfranchisement. That manifesto sent hundreds of the more quiescent Suffragists to their bank-books, to see how much more in the coming year they could spare to help their side. But for Lord Cromer's appeal many a ten-pound note that would have gone into clothes, or holidays, or what not, will find its way to Clement's Inn, to be transmuted into strength for the Suffrage Cause.

One small effect of the new Anti activity will serve the Open-Minded as a straw to show the direction of the wind.

A carefully—very carefully—expended fragment of Anti-Suffragist capital was invested some days ago in advertising. A lady on a shopping expedition met, in the streets of London, a sorrowful little procession of sandwichmen bearing the announcement "women do NOT want the vote." Now the lady in question had gone forth with no thought of propaganda. But for her encounter with that modest sign of Anti-Suffrage life the lady would have returned to her "proper sphere," bearing her womanly sheaves of frills, or feathers, or perchance a fresh supply of darning cotton for those objects of such passionate concern to many an Anti-Suffragist soul.

But how could the lady go home and darn socks in peace remembering those sad old men crawling about the London streets with their mistaken information? No doubt there were more potential sandwichmen without even a misleading message to carry. Why not give the other old men a job? The lady, so rumour says, repaired to Clement's Inn. But the people there were all very busy. Too preoccupied to think about the old men.

"But their boards say we don't want the vote!"

"Well, that only reminds people that we do."

Still the lady-shopper was not content. She drew a cheque and asked to have it applied for the purpose of sending a much greater number of sandwichmen to follow the "Don'ts" about, with posters, telling what bodies of organised women "do." The list was so long that there was danger of the "Don'ts" being lost in it. At least that would appear to be the reason why the old men bearing the "Don'ts" disappeared from the London streets, and left the "Do's" in possession. I offer the little incident as a symbol.

Many such straws will be blown about in the autumn winds this year, if the Antis keep their word. And be sure the Novice will take note of these straws.

If the recipient of Anti-Suffragist literature has mind as well as "openness"—if she is an ally worth enlisting—before she gives in her adherence to the opponents of the Suffrage, she will (to some extent) examine the claims of its defenders.

Even if, in this perilous exercise, she is not con-

verted to the Suffrage faith, she will learn enough of the activity and determination of those who are, to make her doubt whether she is well inspired to drop her subscription into the pit of hopeless opposition.

If she mixes at all freely with both camps she cannot fail to discover that many of the Antis who at the beginning of their campaign were confident and active, have since, upon one pretext or another, withdrawn from the contest.

She will see that, though ease is not what the Suffragist is "out for," it is easier every day to be a Suffragist—and every day it is harder to be an Anti.

The reader of official Anti publications will hardly fail to catch the plaintive note in the reminder that the Suffrage Movement is not only amply supplied with money, but (unkindest cut of all) is "served by women who seem to give their whole time to its promotion." The charge is truer than the writer of the lamentation knew. If the Antis are not over-eager to give their money for their cause, still less are they willing to give themselves. If the forces of reaction have any unpaid servants, they are very few. The numbers of those who, without money and without price, work for enfranchisement—they are legion.

The more the inquirer wants to see the Anti cause prevail, the more she will realise the significance of the exhaustless stream of help flowing towards the Suffrage societies. Every day more women, and happily more men, are giving time, money, and

determination, in increasing volume, to swell the flood. Not even Mrs. Partington would try to turn back this tide. She leaves Mr. Partington, with his hundred thousand pound mop, to prove the futility of the undertaking.

TIME TABLE

MAY, 1911

THE permeation of journalism, as well as of the less evanescent forms of literature, by Suffragist views has been an element in the propaganda so quiet as to find a way unchallenged into many an Anti stronghold, yet so steady as to show its widespread result only in the retrospect. In this educational work the women have their share. Our Writers' Suffrage League has among its members Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists, women of leisure and women who toil for their daily bread, members who are militant and members who are non-militant. The League therefore did not, and could not, as a body, take part in the more active political demonstrations. Its members expected to be left free, and were left free, to serve the Cause in whatever way individual opinion and opportunity made fitting and practicable. An opening for propaganda was presented to writers when, in response to the new demand for information about the fight for Enfranchisement, a great London daily ("The Standard") for the first time devoted columns of its space, daily, to full accounts of meetings, deputations, debates, and to articles and correspondence for and against the Suffrage. A vast amount of the most effective work done by the Writers has been anonymous.

Of signed work the League has published: "How the Vote was Won," Cicely Hamilton and Hedley Charlton; "The Suffrage Question," by Madeleine Lucette Ryley; a cartoon post card of "Justice," by W. H. Margetson; "A Pageant of Great Women," by Cicely Hamilton; a

"Prologue," by Laurence Housman; "Why?" by Elizabeth Robins; "Lady Geraldine's Speech," by Beatrice Harraden; "Women's Plea," a poem by Lilian Sauter; "Under His Roof," by Elizabeth Robins; and "Feminism," by May Sinclair.

The League has sent delegates to various conferences, organised benefit matinees, held drawing-room and public meetings, and took part in the great procession organised by the W.S.P.U., in June, 1910, when one hundred members walked under the Writers' banner, and four carriages were decorated with its colours. The League was also well represented in the procession of July, 1910, and in that of June, 1911, when its contingent walked behind a new banner which had been specially designed by Mr. Margetson.

The League has, from the first, received that kind of devoted, highly intelligent, and self-merging service from the acting Committee (notably in the person of its Hon. Sec., Miss Hatton), which is one of the many reassuring manifestations brought us by the Women's Movement and one of its chief honours. The League is so fortunate as to have now for its President that celebrated writer and woman of proved public spirit, Mrs. Flora Annie Steele.

One can hardly take leave of the Writers' League without mention of the distinguished member who, serving the Cause in her way, has made the largest sacrifice of time, ambition, health, and most of the outward things that sensitive, proud-spirited women prize. On the fingers of one hand might be counted the people in this country who have made as many and as valuable converts to the Suffrage as Miss Evelyn Sharp. I saw one of her converts once, on a grey winter morning. At an hour when most of the London millions were still asleep in their beds, I saw a man standing alone on the bleak, wind-buffeted street-corner, opposite the gates of Holloway. Others presently joined him, and all stood waiting, a long while it seemed to us (what to those on

the other side!)—waiting for the slight figure with the spiritual face and shining eyes to come out of prison. And when she came I noticed, among many other things, the gentle reverence of the welcome given to Evelyn Sharp by the man I had been observing chiefly because he was in clerical dress. And I wondered at my own wonder to see him there. For surely there was once a Church "Militant."

We, of the Writers' League, found yet another ally "in orders." The Rev. Dr. Cobb, of St. Ethelburga's, a good friend to the principle of the Suffrage, did us the honour to preside at one of our meetings. And this was before the Church had given the sanction afterwards vouchsafed at the Queen's Hall Meeting, under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Oxford. Canon Hensley Henson had not yet said publicly that "the principle of Christianity was the equality of the sexes," nor reminded the public that women in the apostolic age had frequently been preachers. Nor had the Bishops of Winchester and Lincoln, along with many of the clergy, publicly declared for the Suffrage.

I do not seek to associate any Churchman with a form of social faith, or works, which he does not explicitly endorse. I have little doubt but even so valiant a soldier of the Cross as the Bishop of Oxford may draw the line of his sympathy this side of militant women. Yet there were many of these amongst his audience at the meeting called to emphasise the religious aspect of the Women's Movement—women to whom it meant much that such a man should say in the face of protest and in defiance of criticism (*vide* the newspapers of the day), "I am as certain as I can be of anything in the world, that the Woman's Movement, however much it may benefit by the individual activities of men and women, will never secure its position without legislative change, without such legislative change as makes women, side by side with men, voters and constitutors of our legislature."

On the same occasion the voice of the younger genera-

tion in the Church spoke hopefully to our ears through the mouth of the Headmaster of Repton. The Rev. William Temple began his speech with these words: "The question which is occupying us to-night is quite undoubtedly the profoundest question and the most far-reaching in its ramifications of any that now confronts European civilisation." In his peroration he urged: "Daughters of the new era, claim your share in the world's movement. . . ." And many of the daughters present preferred Mr. Temple's description of the work they had in hand, rather than the limit-setting phrase under which the meeting was invoked.

XIII

THE WOMEN WRITERS

At the Criterion, May 23, 1911

Dr. Cobb, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Most of what I have to say will be addressed more particularly to my fellow Women Writers. But I should like, in passing, to put before the gentlemen present a point of view too often obscured in this controversy of ours. There are people under the impression that Anti-Suffragists have a better opinion of men than Suffragists have. I want to say that the very reverse of that is true. I might go farther, and say that only Suffragists really have faith in men. Only Suffragists really respect them. You cannot respect men if you do not respect human nature. There is such a very great deal of human nature in men.

I was reminded afresh a day or two ago of the way in which Anti-Suffragists (all unconsciously) betray their poor opinion of men. This one of many instances occurs in the speech of a woman writer made, a little while ago, at a dinner of the Hardwicke Society—a speech against the resolution in favour of women as jury members. What this lady said

may be supposed to have had some weight, for she was chosen as a brilliant and distinguished (deservedly distinguished) representative of our profession—not the founder and leader of the Anti-Suffragist party, but a woman well accustomed to the success that crowned her efforts on the occasion to which I refer. For the resolution she spoke against was defeated by a large majority. In the course of her speech this Woman Writer said she was opposed to the participation of her own sex in the administration of justice. She declared that woman's nature did not contain "a proper element of justice" . . . that women were by nature unfair, though (notice this), though their unfairness, in some instances, was a source of fascination. "Where," she asked, "would men get sympathy *if women were impartial?*"

The report does not say how the great legal lights and other learned gentlemen met that shock—but it is the kind of back-handed compliment the Anti-Suffragist will often pay.

Only the Suffragists appreciate you gentlemen! If we criticise you from time to time, what does that show but our own good faith, and our confidence in yours? We will criticise you to your faces, and give you a chance to set us right!

Now, to my fellow Women Writers I have something to say about our work—about the field for the exercise of literary talent, and for service to our Cause.

We have agreed before to-day as to the practically limitless power of Suggestion. When we talk about

Suggestion we know we are dealing with forces beyond any reach of science as yet to gauge. Still we notice how, for ages, this great factor of Suggestion has been pressed into the service of the education of men. From the time a boy is old enough to follow a fairy-tale, he is told how Jack killed the Giant. Jack always kills the Giant, just as David always slays Goliath. When the boy is older he begins to take from history, from the classics, and from literature in general, the incentive and the cue for action.

The Philosophy of History is new in education. Until yesterday history was little more than the record of the deeds of heroes—of men who fought against great obstacles and overcame them.

Now what impression is the eager girl-mind given of the world? That it is a place not only where all the great deeds are done by men—but a place where all the great qualities are said to be masculine. The world will never know how much power to serve it has been killed in women's hearts by that old phrase, "Only a girl." The pages of the past are strewn with such records as that which says: "A daughter was born this day to Duke Ercole, and received the name of Beatrice, being the child of Madonna Leonora, his wife. And there were no rejoicings—because everyone wished for a son." Yet what boy of that noble house made so great a figure in fifteenth-century Italy—what Prince of D'Este exercised such influence upon art and politics as this same Beatrice? And in whom of all her house is the general reader (as well as the student of the Renaissance) so ready to take an interest to-day?

My complaint is that enough has not been made of such traces as history preserves of significant lives lived by women. When biographies are attempted, too often they fall into feeble hands. Or worse—into the hands of those literary scavengers who search women's lives in the spirit of Peeping Tom. Some of the greatest women of the past have suffered most from this sort of posthumous dishonour. When we read the pages of such chroniclers as I have in mind, we see again and yet again that the fine work the woman did was an offence—for which she is made to pay by gross intrusion into her private life, and by misleading accounts of some detail which the intrusion revealed. What is there in such biographies to inspire and to lead you on? Everything rather to lame the spirit and drive you back into obscurity. Yet these literary outrages should rather call upon women to take possession of this field themselves.

As an illustration of what a woman can do here, let us take that fine example of art, which was also a fine example of literary friendship, Mrs. Gaskell's "Life of Charlotte Brontë." Very gifted men have tried their hands at that story. Oblivion is their portion.

Would that George Eliot had found a Mrs. Gaskell too! George Eliot's life fell into the hands of a man whom every lover of literature must honour on other grounds. His failure over George Eliot's life was the reward of his secret contempt for greatness when it appeared in the guise of a woman. I think few well-intentioned men can enjoy writing about a woman's

life. They do it with so embarrassed an air. Perhaps they feel like a man asked to do housework when he longs to follow the fortunes of soldiers, kings, *conquistadores*.

But the distaste for recording the domestic life of woman is as nothing compared to the distaste for contemplating her in any other relation. Before that dilemma you will notice how the less irate man will take refuge in facetiousness. When the diplomatists of Great Catherine's day were routed by the Empress, they salved their feelings by calling her "Kitty of Russia"—well behind her back, as has been said. Some of the most distinguished men of the last century, who went to see George Eliot, were disturbed at finding her an object of general homage. They came away joking nervously about the High Priestess, the Oracle, the Sibyl. No such need to ridicule a great influence afflicted these gentlemen at the spectacle of reverence shown George Meredith—reverence so gladly paid by women as well as men. But we must forgive those gentlemen. Shakespeare himself could not resist belittling Joan of Arc.

Men have one excuse for this sort of blindness which women have not. Women know that, advantageous as it may be to be born a man, it is a tremendously fine thing to be born a woman. This is the knowledge we must pass on to girls. I hear there are girls who hate so-called girls' books. They cannot have been given Miss Evelyn Sharp's. But why do they hate the ordinary girls' book? Because many a girl resents being put off with mere goody-

goody, and variants of the Patient-Griselda theme. They like to hear about girls who feel as they themselves feel, and who do some of the things they long to do.

The average woman, too, takes an interest in other women, and in other women's achievements—an interest which, in the average man, seems largely confined to the love-story. The woman likes the love-story too. But she knows very well that isn't all there is to be said about a woman's life.

We specially like hearing about people who have travelled our road. The woman in society makes such a run on a book like Lady St. Helier's "Recollections" that The Times Club has to insert a pathetic little slip beseeching the reader to send back the volume at the earliest possible moment. If you are a member of a profession, no book has for you quite the same fascination as a book by, or about, a woman of the same craft. When I first began to be interested in the Stage I scoured the libraries for lives of actresses. But the biographies seemed to be nearly all about actors, and very poor when they weren't! Not till actresses took to writing their own lives did we have records of women in this art so illuminating, so masterly, as Fanny Kemble's "Recollections," "The Life of Clara Morris," or that work of magic—where between the two boards of a book you shall find the charm, the poetry of a personality that made the English stage a place of enchantment during the reign of Ellen Terry. These, and books like them, are a foretaste of that library that waits to be written.

I stood the other day thinking over these things before a boy's bookcase. Do that, any of you. You will feel afresh how well men have served their half of the world in this great matter of Suggestion. All those stirring stories, those high adventures, whether historic—like "The Life of Nelson" or "The Story of our Empire," whether Miss Yonge's "Greek Heroes" or tales like Stevenson's "Treasure Island," or Kipling's "Kim"; and others, rows on rows!

Which, of all these books, tells about a girl's courage, good temper, wit, resourcefulness, endurance? Not one. Have these qualities, then, been lacking in our sex? We know the answer to that. These qualities were all there, but they had to wait for women themselves to celebrate them.

I do not complain of men in this connection. We all write best what we know best. And in one way the untilled field is a piece of good fortune for the Women Writers of the future—the women who (among other things) are going to fulfil, at last, the ancient Euripidean prophecy of a day when the old bards' stories—

> "Of frail brides and faithless shall be shrivelled as with fire,
>
> . . . . . .
>
> And woman, yea, woman, shall be terrible in story.
> The tales, too, meseemeth, shall be other than of yore
> For a fear there is that cometh out of woman and a glory,
> And the hard hating voices shall encompass her no more."

Fellow-members of the League, you have such a field as never writers had before. An almost virgin field. You are, in respect of life described fearlessly

from the woman's standpoint—you are in that position for which Chaucer has been so envied by his brother-poets, when they say he found the English language with the dew upon it. You find woman at the dawn.

Critics have often said that women's men are badly drawn. Ladies, what shall we say of many of the girls drawn by men ? I think we shall be safer *not* to say. But there she stands—the Real Girl !—waiting for you to do her justice. No mere chocolate-box "type," but a creature of infinite variety, of curiosities and ambitions, of joy in physical action, of high dreams of love and service, sharer in her brother's

> ". . . exultations, agonies,
> And man's unconquerable soul."

The Great Adventure is before her. *Your* Great Adventure is to report her faithfully. So that her children's children reading her story shall be lifted up—proud and full of hope. "Of such stuff," they shall say, "our mothers were! Sweethearts and wives—yes, and other things besides: leaders, discoverers, militants, fighting every form of wrong."

TIME TABLE

JULY, 1910—JUNE, 1911

THE "Antis" had an ally little suspected amongst the rank and file in either camp.

Those persons who were relying on the avowed pro-Suffrage opinions of certain Cabinet Ministers received a rude shock in the course of the debate on the second reading of the Conciliation Bill, July 11th and 12th, 1910.

The measure was supported from the Government bench by Mr. Haldane and Mr. Runciman. From the Conservative side by Mr. Balfour, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, and Lord Hugh Cecil. Among Labour men by Mr. Snowden, Mr. Keir Hardie, and Mr. Shackleton. Irish support was given by William Redmond and Mr. Kettle. The expected speeches from consistent Anti-Suffragist members were coolly received in the House, and made little or no impression outside. But that cannot be said of two other contributions to the debate. To the unbounded delight of the Antis and the stupefaction of Suffragists, the frankly "Anti" Prime Minister was supported in his denunciation of the Bill (though ostensibly on different grounds) by two Ministers calling themselves Suffragists.

Mr. Winston Churchill, whose advance in understanding of the question had been so marked during the Dundee election, now, from his safe seat on the Government bench, spoke against the Bill.

Rumours called "wild" were current on the eve of the debate to the effect that Mr. Lloyd George was not so well pleased with the Bill as the Conciliation Com-

mittee thought they had reason to believe. But this idea was scouted even by persons not concerned to uphold the seriousness of Mr. Lloyd George's avowed convictions on the subject of Woman Suffrage. Among those who, upon whatever ground, believed in the principle, who better than Mr. Lloyd George would understand the importance of sustaining and utilising the hard-won unity of policy declared by the most active friends of Suffrage throughout the kingdom? Who better than Mr. Lloyd George could appreciate the tactical reasons for the moderation of the Bill? Who better realise the futility of trying to get a wider Bill through at this juncture? Who better know, if he had any right to call himself a Suffragist at all, the importance of not letting slip this best chance that had ever come of securing at least some sort of political recognition for women? Here more than anywhere in the political field, *c'est le premier pas qui coûte.*

Mr. Lloyd George did all in his power to kill the Conciliation Bill. He afterwards boasted publicly of his success.

The weakening effect of Mr. Lloyd George's desertion was less apparent in the immediate than in the secondary results. The predisposition of the House in favour of the Bill was shown in the passing of the second reading by a large majority.

Those who knew anything of the history of the Suffrage question knew that the triumphant second reading was but one step, and not even a decisive one, on the way to serious dealing with the issue. Suffragists who still believed that Mr. Lloyd George had not given conciliation its death-blow, were much perplexed to see the poor Bill fall into one of those traps provided for the hopes of simple-minded reformers by "Parliamentary Procedure." Even persons whose business is to know this game (none too dignified when used for gambling over issues of grave importance) were beaten in the next round of "Parliamentary Procedure." Some of the best-inten-

tioned friends of the Conciliation Bill voted that the measure should now be discussed in the whole House, instead of being sent to a Grand Committee. This vote was carried. Result: deadlock, unless the Government would "give time." The Government, under the leadership of an Anti-Suffragist, naturally declined to give time.

Great are the uses of Parliamentary Procedure.

Every effort was made outside the Commons to induce Mr. Asquith to yield this point of "time." A great campaign was carried on throughout the country with the aim of consolidating, and making yet more evident, the growing volume of opinion to the effect that the head of the Government, standing also as chief interpreter of the will of the people, should give heed to a demand so well and so widely supported. Though he should continue to ignore the wishes of women who were Suffragists, he might, they hoped, be induced to listen to the increasing number of men who were Suffragists—to the resolutions passed by the great civic corporations of Manchester, Liverpool, Bradford, Nottingham, Glasgow, Dundee, Dublin, Cork, and thirty more, calling on the Government to "give time" for the Women's Bill.

The hopes raised by the support of these popularly elected bodies were dashed by the voice crying out in Wales against Conciliation. Not the Prime Minister himself was more concerned to defeat the Bill which enjoyed the largest support ever given to a measure for enfranchising women, than the "Suffragist" Chancellor of the Exchequer. What effect Mr. Lloyd George's denunciations had upon the general public we cannot say. But we can speak for their effect upon the people who were working hardest, and caring most wholeheartedly, for the issues bound up in the political recognition of women. Recognising Mr. Lloyd George's growing influence in the Cabinet, they began to recognise in him the chief obstacle to a peaceful solution of the Suffrage problem. Hopes of gaining their end by com-

promise, by conciliation, by truce, waned as the autumn wore on. The sense of uneasiness and suspense increased daily. At last, in response to pressure on the part of women in his constituency, Mr. Asquith received a small deputation in East Fife. All the encouragement he vouchsafed them was contained in the assurance that facilities for carrying forward the Conciliation Bill would certainly not be granted before the end of the year. When they pressed for something more definite than that, asking what they had to hope in the year to come, his answer was: "Wait and see."

The Women's Social and Political Union felt that it had waited and seen enough.

The truce was declared at an end. At the next Albert Hall meeting, in a few minutes, a sum of £9000 was subscribed to the new fighting fund.

In the same month, November, 1910, the Liberal-Conservative Conference publicly confessed its failure to arrive at an understanding. The quarrel between Lords and Commons was to be submitted almost at once to the test of a General Election.

On the Friday after the assembling of Parliament (November 18th, 1910), Mr. Asquith outlined his programme. Those women, more patient than other Suffragists, eagerly listening for some word with regard to the political claims of their half of the world, heard the Prime Minister laying down one after another proposals intended to meet the wishes of electors. When would he remember the women? He found a place even for a proposal which the country had shown no eagerness for, and which many members of the House of Commons (on divers grounds) had hotly opposed—a proposal to lay upon taxpayers the extra burden of payment of members of Parliament—men whom women might not vote for or against, but would have to help to pay. No slightest reference to that portion of the public who were women. The nation might have been composed solely of men for all the consideration the Liberal Government

deigned to show to women's special interests, their demands or their very existence.

And what, all this time, was being done with the Conciliation Bill? It had been blessed by a majority made up of all parties, yet it had fallen out of the category of measures having power to achieve the sole end for which they were brought into being. Under the subtle disability of that spell "Parliamentary Procedure" it had mysteriously "gone lame." It was not fit, apparently, to enter the open lists. So successfully had it been hamstrung, that it made no perceptible struggle for a place in the programme of important measures. Its sponsors in Parliament seemed to have acquiesced in its being smuggled out of sight—at least for the time being.

By observing how other Bills unwelcome to authority secured attention, women were beginning to realise there is only one fitting season for a measure of admitted urgency, and that is Now.

In anticipation of Mr. Asquith's pronouncement of policy, the day that saw it made public saw the members of the Women's Social and Political Union holding a public meeting. When they heard of the silence maintained in Parliament on the subject of the Conciliation Bill, when they learned that the sole recognition of women's existence was the tacit suggestion to levy a fresh tax upon them, the largest deputation yet dispatched set out from Caxton Hall to the House of Commons—a *via Dolorosa* never to be forgotten either by the three hundred volunteers, or by other women in the throng threading Parliament Square and the tributary streets.

The deputation had been divided into detachments, the first headed by Mrs. Pankhurst. Another by a sister of Mrs. Fawcett, Dr. Garrett Anderson, twice Mayor of Aldeburgh. Her venerable face, lined and valiant, reminded us of those battles long ago, when she had pioneered a way for women into the medical

profession just as now, at seventy years of age, she was prepared to pioneer a way for women which she could not hope herself to travel far—the broad highway of equal citizenship. Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson, the Hon. Mrs. Haverfield, and Princess Sophia Dhuleep Singh were amongst those leading other groups.

Many women not of the deputation, but concerned for it, yielded to the exhortation that they should "stand by," or mingle with the crowd. Even these mere witnesses became quickly aware that a great draft of police new to this sort of exigency had been called out. They were perceived to be carrying into effect, with a ruthless unanimity, some new idea of how women on deputation to the Prime Minister should be treated. Instead of arresting them after a struggle, the instruction evidently was to use harsher measures than had ever yet been employed in order to avoid the necessity of arrest. These inconvenient women were to be terrorised that this deputation might be the last, and that the prisons might be relieved of a class of offender highly embarrassing alike to penal authority and to the Government.

I am so far from being the person qualified to write the story of that day, I cannot even read the accounts (attested and sworn) by the women of character who were the chief actors—chief victims. I did not myself see the worst, but I saw enough to send me away sick and shuddering, after two hours spent in going through and about the vast crowds, taking back to Caxton Hall or to the nearest teashop, or giving for a few minutes the shelter of the cab to now one, now another woman, bruised, fainting, aghast.

I have to set down this fact: I saw no one who had been out in the struggle that day who was not determined, the moment she got back breath and strength, to return to the others—those tragic figures still fruitlessly battling their way towards the Gate for Strangers. One woman was so hurt, we tried to get her away—long enough at least for a chance to recover. I thought we

had succeeded, and was rejoicing at the police order to drive on, when a break in the crowd showed the vision of an old lady struggling among insulting faces. The woman in our cab, not young herself, broke from us, opened the door, and the last we saw of her she was fighting her way towards the older woman through the shouting, surging mass. No, not the last of her. The police had cleared a way and compelled our chauffeur to move on. But the woman's face kept following us; her words went on beating at our ears: "I didn't know! Oh, I didn't know—until to-day!

One hundred and fifteen women, persisting in the face of every brutality in trying to reach the Commons, were finally arrested.

No wonder that those responsible for the action of the police that day shrank from seeing the true history of "Black Friday" exposed. A quite unprecedented course was initiated the next morning in the police-court. Every one of the hundred and fifteen prisoners were released, apparently in the hope that (being denied the chance of making public the facts attested by witness) the treatment to which the deputation had been subjected might never be known except to the perpetrators and their victims.

In saying this one seems to record an impression of deliberate cruelty hardly human. Yet we know quite well the cruelty could not have been as deliberate as it seemed. To have foreseen it in all its hideousness the instigators must have been men of imagination as well as fiends. I believe they were mere blunderers. I believe they afterwards bitterly regretted the bad statesmanship which devised this new way of evading their obligations —and that they shrank with a weakness entirely human from knowing more about the appalling result. Three years before, Authority had missed the one right way of successfully meeting the new need, and all this wild essaying, first one and then another wrong way, only bewildered overburdened wits and strained exasperated nerves.

In nothing had the wrong way failed more signally than in the endeavour to terrorise women. That new knowledge of life and its meaning to others, the admission made by the refugee of a moment springing out of the little haven of the cab, found witnesses in many a heart. Only perhaps through some such conflict could the sheltered learn the need of the shelterless, learn the contempt felt by Authority for women as a sex, the depth of the disrespect felt by the man in the street for the woman in the street.

The implications in that lesson made the sufferings of Black Friday ministrant not to horrified self-pity, but to a new sense of sex solidarity, a new ideal of service to the women who have not merely an hour or so of disrespect to endure, but a lifetime.

Three days after the great essay at terrorising, yet another deputation renewed the attempt to interview the Prime Minister—waiting at Westminster till the House rose. The next day Mr. Asquith thought well to promise that he would give facilities in the new Parliament for effectively proceeding with a Suffrage Bill so framed as to admit of free amendment. But he declined to say whether the opportunity, such as it was, would be given during the first year of the new Parliament.

More at the moment than later the Women's Social and Political Union was blamed for not accepting Mr. Asquith's promise as a valuable concession, and blamed for continuing militant acts which resulted in the arrest of one hundred and fifty-nine more women.

At the General Election, which took place at the fag-end of the year 1910, the Women's Social and Political Union consistently opposed the Government nominee. In ten constituencies where the women were active the Government lost. All the expense and dislocation of trade and of life in general, incident to a trial of party strength, resulted in the paltry gain of one additional Liberal seat. To contrast the results of this election with that of 1906, when the Liberals swept the

country, was to form some idea of the fall in Liberal prestige.

Meanwhile, others besides the leaders of the Women's Social and Political Union had reached the conclusion that Mr. Asquith's promise of some facility some day, was on examination a less explicit assurance than could be accepted by serious sponsors for a serious reform. The Conciliation Bill was resuscitated, and its scope somewhat modified in an endeavour to remove Mr. Lloyd George's objections.

In May, at a debate on the second reading of the revised Bill, 255 members voting in favour brought in a majority of 167. Surely now, after these repeated endorsements, the Government would grant the necessary "further facilities" at no distant day. Yet distant it was to be.

The year 1911 was yet young when Suffragists heard that the best facilities obtainable for going forward with the Bill were to take effect some time in 1912.

The Militants prepared for protest. Under this spur some clarification of the promise was elicited with great difficulty.

The Women's Social and Political Union turned from thoughts of immediate militancy to the work of organising once more a popular demonstration of a nature entirely peaceful.

XIV

COME AND SEE

(THE CORONATION SUFFRAGE PAGEANT)

Printed in the Westminster Gazette, June 16, 1911

WITHIN the next few days the world of London will be offered many stirring and picturesque sights. The Press has heralded these happenings in thousands of columns for many weeks. We are reminded twenty times a day of the great shows and ceremonies that will attend the Coronation of a King. We walk the changed streets seeing on every side signs of preparation, in some cases unbeautiful enough, wiping out the ancient landmarks in the fervour of preparation for the populace to "Come and See!"

To see what? Not alone the ceremonies attendant on the crowning of the King, but an object-lesson in the power and dignity of Imperial manhood. No one who has looked on any similar scene but has brought away an impression less of homage to a peaceful Ruler, and to the triumph of a humane civilisation, than of a splendidly barbaric Pageant of militarism. Even in the funeral rites of the Peacemaker this note was struck to shrillness. In the two

Coronation processions of next week amongst all those glittering masses of men will be one woman—a somewhat lonely figure, with her handful of attendant ladies—for the rest the Royal show might faithfully be summed up as a Pageant of Arms and the Man.

Yet in the Empire there are other arms, protective, not destructive; arms which have helped to build this Greatness—arms which have upborne each one of those who bear the sceptre, mace, and sword. That army behind the army is given little space and scant remembering in the Royal Pageant—and yet is half the Empire.

Happily civilisation has brought His Majesty's country so far that King George's Coronation week will not go by without some sign from that forgotten host of a consciousness of duty and high destiny.

The preparation for this Act of Faith, and of public spirit, on the part of women has been carried on with a misleading quietness. For this, no tiers of timber cover the London turf, no vast scaffolding hides Abbey, or Church, or ancient monument. A brief paragraph in a paper here and there is all the outside world has seen of the preparation for what will be a sight without a parallel.

So far as Royal pageants go, the eyes that saw the Jubilee can hardly expect to find that spectacle surpassed. But no eye will have seen anything like the Woman's Pageant of to-morrow.

Though individual societies, representing women's various activities and political creeds, have shown

their strength before in the London streets, never before have so many of these associations united in anything like such numbers, or with anything approaching such enthusiasm. But that is not all. The Woman's Procession, projected, guided, marshalled by British women, has grown to be of international interest, and is certain therefore to make its appeal to the stranger within the gate.

No European country but is represented in the ranks. One great feature of this demonstration is the spontaneous generosity it has evoked. I visited three of the places in different parts of London where the work of preparation was being carried on. I found rooms full of volunteer artists bent over historical designs; yet other rooms full of volunteers carrying out the plans, women cutting fabrics, women sewing, women stencilling banners, gilding emblems. The hours are long in these places where the preparations go forward. But the women who work longest are the women who have the privilege (as some think it) to play all the time, if they prefer. Women who have never worked hard before have been working for the Pageant these hot June days, from eight in the morning till ten at night.

One of the people new to this sort of strain explained the secret of her steadfastness: "When I think I am too tired to do any more, I remember those other women who are not working voluntarily, just once in a lifetime. Thinking of those sweated women keeps me at it."

Some of the most exacting work consists in guiding

the services of the undisciplined and the vague. The supreme difficulty has been at times to keep a straight face—as before the handsome offer of Miss ——, who is "willing to be one of the Queens, if you have any left over."

Some of the dressmakers in a small way of business have been among the best and most generous helpers, ready to give time and skill, "out of pure devotion," some say. Others say, out of sad knowledge of the need of this thing the Pageant stands for. These and other helpers who will not appear to-morrow, will be in many minds as "the Queens" go by.

At the head of the main section (stretching from Blackfriars Bridge to Charing Cross) "General" Drummond will ride in front of the Colour-Bearer, and behind her Miss Annan Bryce, in the silver armour of Jeanne d'Arc. Then will come a symbolic group of New Crusaders, followed by musicians. Then the leaders of the Women's Social and Political Union, and in their train that strange portent, the body of women, seven hundred strong, who have endured imprisonment in the struggle for citizenship. After another band of musicians will come an Historical Pageant, led by a figure representing Abbess Hilda, the Founder of the Benedictine Monastery of Whitby, followed by Peeresses summoned to Parliament in the reign of Edward III, women Governors, Custodians of castles, women burgesses, historically verified as of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, free-women of various guilds and corporations, followed by the formally disfranchised women of 1832 and after. Much thought and care has been given to the

Empire Car, whereon are seated two figures representing East and West. Over their heads is the Emperor-King's roof-tree, and at their feet symbolic presentments of the various dependencies and colonies. But that the writers' section claims Mrs. Flora Annie Steele, she might have represented British India, since no less an authority than Mr. Rudyard Kipling has said of her acquaintance with the East: "She knows it all as well as I." Before and behind the car, and linking all together in rose-chains, are the bearers of the staves, which are surmounted by emblems of the Kingdom and the Empire. The Scottish Contingent brings women pipers in Highland dress; Wales brings her singers; and Ireland her women in Colleen Bawn cloaks, carrying gilded harps.

More music, and then, after thirty-one of the branches of the W.S.P.U., come the Imperial Contingents. After them the International Groups—led by the Americans in recognition of our common tongue and blood.

In the Finnish Society, marching behind their beautiful silk banner, will be Madame Malmberg and other Finnish ladies in national costume. Other countries have sent women distinguished in art, in science, and in law.

The Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association precedes the Pageant of Queens. After them comes the New Constitutional Society. Then the Actresses, led by Hedda Gabler, in the accomplished person of the Princess Bariatinsky on horseback. The President, Mrs. Forbes-Robertson, and the members of the Actresses' League will follow.

After these come the women musicians, under the leadership of Dr. Ethel Smyth, to whose inspiring music all the many feet will march.

Mrs. Despard and the officials and members of the Women's Freedom League are followed by the various Church Leagues and the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society.

From the other direction, coming up Whitehall, Mrs. Fawcett, in her doctor's robes, leading the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, will be joined by the University sections.

From Westminster Bridge to Northumberland Avenue will stretch a further detachment headed by the Women Writers. After the artists, the Fabian group, nurses, gardeners, the great body of teachers, and women in business, twenty-nine more branches of the W.S.P.A., and the various men's societies.

I find it impossible even to enumerate all the groups, let alone describe them, a reason the more why this Pageant should be seen. Another and a most excellent reason is that it will present aspects of uncommon beauty. The third reason it should be seen is that this procession will be significant beyond any, even in this memorable week. Here will be the greatest gathering of women the world has ever seen in the world's greatest city. Four miles of women marching towards one goal. Many of them have not come lightly by the power to do this thing the public will be looking at to-morrow. Those who have marched before have noticed many a woman looking out of windows with troubled eyes at the regiments going by in the mud or the dust of London streets.

Hundreds of those who last year watched the others will be found to-morrow among the marchers.

That is one of the significant things about this army. Always it is greater than before. And for all the "roses, roses," that wreathe the cars and festoon the six hundred emblem-crowned staves, for all the music and the smiling, always this army is at heart a graver host; ready for service, and, if need be, for suffering. Heaven send that one aspect of the old need is past. A Liberal editor wrote last week of the Coronation rite: "Let us admit that when men took it seriously it was a noble tribute to the Liberal faith that refuses to base authority on force."

The great act of peace and public profession of faith that will be offered to-morrow, must go far to show the idleness of attempting, any longer, to maintain that enough women are not enough in earnest about the idea that sets this procession marching through the London streets.

TIME TABLE

JUNE–OCTOBER, 1911

DURING the summer and autumn of 1911 the peaceful propaganda in support of the Conciliation Bill went forward vigorously and uninterruptedly—so far as Suffragists were concerned. All was harmony, except when Mr. Lloyd George sounded from time to time a jarring note. He urged the Parliamentary Committee of Liberal Suffragists to ballot for a wider measure, and to claim that the promise of "a week in 1912," won with such difficulty from the Prime Minister, should apply to a measure embodying the widening amendments. Challenged in the House about this, Mr. Lloyd George said that the Prime Minister's promise did not refer strictly and solely to the Conciliation Bill, but to any Bill with an open title. The drift of this was clearly seen by those who were genuine Suffragists. A vigorous protest was made against this devious manipulation of a pledge obtained for a different use and a more practical end. So great was the outcry against the threatened contravention of the spirit of the Prime Minister's undertaking, that Mr. Asquith was obliged to step into the breach made by the Chancellor. In a public letter to the Chairman of the Conciliation Committee (Lord Lytton) the Prime Minister repudiated the construction put upon his words by Mr. Lloyd George, reiterated the pledge, and said it applied, as Suffragists supposed, to the Conciliation Bill, and to that Bill alone. But the attempt to divert a pro-

mise from the service of a measure on whose behalf it could be of use, to a measure too unwieldy to save, inspired a profound uneasiness in those who had worked tirelessly for the Conciliation Bill, and waited long and patiently to see it given a chance.

XV

AT CROWBOROUGH, SUSSEX

October 28, 1911

Lady Brassey, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to a point at which the old supporters of Women's Suffrage—going about among the towns and villages of England—see on every side a legion of new friends flocking to the standard. Less and less are the principles underlying this reform denied, or even seriously questioned, by the general public. Of course, if there is anyone here to-night who wishes to be told the grounds for the faith that is in us—he or she will have an opportunity during the evening to put questions.

As a rule, we find that the general public has now accepted the principle that Taxation without Representation is Tyranny; that wisdom is not confined to one sex; and that even more than women are in need of a direct relation to politics—politics, civilised society in general, is in need of the direct co-operation of women.

You might suppose, since these views are now shared by such great numbers, that the persons most interested in this reform might rest on their oars. But never in all these five years' struggle

has there been so great a need as now for vigilance, and for active aid, in guiding the Suffrage ship to port. As I have said, where we had a handful of friends—we count now a host. But the task of Suffragists, though immensely more popular and hopeful, is not, as you might suppose, simplified. Rather, it is complicated. In the hour of victory it is imperilled by the fact that, instead of our more formidable enemies being amongst open opponents, the most insidious are found among the so-called friends of the Suffrage. The danger to public welfare that comes of eliminating the woman's point of view —the half-view inevitable to the exclusively masculine view—was never more apparent than in the way in which some of our so-called friends approach this great question. Certain members of the Government are, as you know, unwilling to be accounted enemies of Women's Suffrage. But they seem unwilling to give the time and trouble necessary to a thorough understanding of the matter, and they will not take from women the women's view of the Women's Bill. Those members of the Government whom we have in mind spend all their best energies upon other issues. Then they turn to our leaders, and as much as say: "It is true that we give the smallest possible attention to this Suffrage question —but with that mere fragment of our mind we easily come to the conclusion that we don't agree with those of you who for years have made the Suffrage your main study." "I think nothing," says Mr. Lloyd George, "of the findings of your Conciliation Committee. Why, your Bill doesn't

enfranchise a single woman solely on the ground that she is married to a qualified voter."

Now, no man has ever expected to be enfranchised because he was married. But Mr. Lloyd George will not support our Bill unless it submits to some such amendment—an amendment which would bring in something like seven millions as compared with the one million the Bill provides for.

Mr. Lloyd George and those politicians of his way of thinking—they are few, we are glad to think—have been content, from the day they entered public life up to a few months ago, that wives should go voteless. *Now* these gentlemen suddenly wake up and say with horror: "Here is a Bill which leaves out many of the wives! It is monstrous!"

The married Suffragists themselves have hardly recovered from their surprise at this unexpected and inopportune championship when along comes Mr. Birrell. Mr. Birrell says, in that genial way of his: "Of course, widows and spinsters ought to have the vote. The one thing I bar is that married women should be given a vote." To neither of these gentlemen does it seem to occur that if woman's voice is desirable in public affairs—that voice should be listened to when it says: "We have looked over every inch of this ground, and we find the only path by which women can go forward is the path pointed out by the Conciliation Bill."

We are proud to think that neither the spinster, the widow, nor the married woman has ever tried to limit her demand for Women's Suffrage by the

conditions of her own private relationships. We find, not Cabinet Ministers, but the Women Suffragists, able to lay aside the individual advantage for sake of the larger good. While men of Mr. Lloyd George's way of thinking on this question show their inability to look at the matter from the point of view of Woman Suffrage as a whole, the Suffragists as a whole say: The individual woman can wait. Even the special class can wait. What cannot wait is the ratifying of the principle.

After an immense amount of hard work, of discussion and adjustment, the Conciliation Bill has been evolved and endorsed by the strongest, most whole-hearted friends of this reform. No other Bill could hope to unite so many in support of its third reading. Yet this is the Bill Mr. Lloyd George so lightly asks us to imperil by widening amendments, which would wreck its chances. Women of all parties, women married or single, rich or poor, are able to distinguish that advantage in the Conciliation Bill which the Chancellor's eyes cannot discern.

Our Bill is the true "Toleration Act," which is the name Mr. Lloyd George has given his Insurance Bill. Speaking at Holborn on Friday night of the difficulties he had to surmount, admitting his Bill to be a compromise, he said his purpose had been to get people into the same Tabernacle, to worship and to work together for at least *one* particular object. That course describes to a nicety the proceedings of the Conciliation Committee, and the attitude of Suffragists towards the Bill. The Bill

is the carefully and rigorously considered basis of agreement amongst Suffragists of all parties. No Cabinet Minister calling himself a Suffragist, who yet rejects this Bill, but will lay upon himself a heavy, a most unenviable, responsibility.

TIME TABLE

October, 1911—March, 1912

There were many, both in and out of Suffrage ranks, ready to tell the Militants that their open mistrust of Mr. Lloyd George was both groundless and impolitic. They would feel ashamed when they saw how well he meant by them!

Meanwhile, if the action, or inaction, of certain champions of longer standing wore an equivocal air, new allies, about whom no doubts could be entertained, had sprung up on every side. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, in pursuance of an ancient right, had appeared at the bar of the House of Commons to plead with the Government on behalf of the women. All over the kingdom County Councils, to a number which had risen from thirty odd to over a hundred, were sending resolutions to the Prime Minister, calling upon the Government to deal fairly and promptly with the Suffrage Bill.

And so it was that the beginning of November, 1911, found Suffragists of all societies full of hope. The busy months of peaceful propaganda had shown them how great a body of adherents, hitherto unsuspected, had been won over to the Cause.

The Anti-Suffragist faction in the Cabinet found itself hard-pressed. That circumstance alone can account for what followed.

Let us remember that at this time, still hoping the revised Conciliation Bill would pass, Militancy was holding its hand. Friends of Mr. Lloyd George were not satisfied. Militancy must also hold its tongue. They did

not explain how, if the Militants were wrong about the Chancellor, he should have exhibited, not once or twice, but consistently, a maladroitness in dealing with the Suffrage not discoverable in his other public activities. Friends of the Chancellor, unable to explain this fact away, nevertheless urged that Suffragists, for their own sake, should cease to sharpen their tongues upon an invaluable, an indispensable ally—the one and only person who could (and who, if Militants had prettier manners, *would*) engineer a Suffrage Bill in all its stages through the House of Commons. That a genuine Suffragist would not do this (if he had the power), however much one group of people doubted him, was a hard saying. And still it was carried to the proper source. It was urged through two hours of private conference. A compromise was at length effected—a peace (extending to the very point of the militant tongue) was to obtain for a given length of time, in order that in the interim, undisturbed even by verbal attacks, Mr. Lloyd George might exercise his miraculous powers upon the Cabinet and in the House of Commons to the end that he, the one man who could, might get Votes for Women.

While the arch-Militant and the intermediary sat in a London club framing the conditions which should leave the Chancellor free even from verbal distractions, free to work his miracles of personal influence—outside the club windows newsboys were calling in the street, "*Manhood Suffrage Bill.*"

It was true. The friend of Woman Suffrage had acquiesced in, if he had not engineered, this disaster to Conciliation.

The enemies of Suffrage threw their caps in the air and danced for joy. Staunch supporters of the Liberal Government, like the "Westminster Gazette," said that, though the Prime Minister's pledge still stood good, "it is obvious that the situation is profoundly altered."

"The Times" spoke of "the mine exploded under the so-called Conciliation Bill." "That Bill the Suffragists

hoped to carry through the House, in which a large number of members are hampered by pledges hastily given to obviate opposition, and perhaps now viewed with regret. They are all provided now with an excellent excuse for doing nothing; for it is obvious that if a truly democratic Woman Suffrage measure is to be in the hands of the House next session, it would be absurd to waste time in tinkering the question. On the other hand, Adult Woman Suffrage is not what many ardent Suffragists desire, and there is the further possibility that the House of Commons may recoil from a wholesale creation of feminine votes."

The "Evening Standard" said of Mr. Asquith and his section of the Cabinet:

"Their new scheme enables them to put the advocates of the Conciliation Bill in a dilemma." . . . "Then our clever lawyer-Premier (with him the equally astute attorney from Carnarvon) has them in his cleft stick. You want women to have the vote? Then give it to the ten millions! You don't want the ten millions to have it? Then your qualified million shall not have it either. So certain persons of both sexes who have defied and annoyed Messrs. Asquith, Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill are 'had' either way."

The "Evening News" said:

"The advocates of Women's Suffrage will, of course, be furious. Mr. Asquith's bombshell will blow the Conciliation Bill to smithereens, for it is clearly impossible to have Manhood Suffrage for men and a property qualification for women. True, the Premier consents to leave the question of Womanhood Suffrage to the House, but he knows well enough what the decision of the House will be. The Conciliation Bill had a chance, but the larger measure has none at all."

"The Globe" said:

"It is not improbable that the most cogent reason for the introduction of Manhood Suffrage is to be found in the fact that the Cabinet is all at sixes and sevens over

what is rather grotesquely known as the Conciliation Bill." . . . "We are no friends to Female Suffrage, but anything more contemptible than the attitude assumed by the Government it is difficult to imagine."

The provincial Press echoed the voices of the Metropolis.

"The Government have certainly dealt a deadly blow at the Women's Suffrage Movement in Parliament," said the "Yorkshire Post."

In the midst of this chorus the voice speaking through "Votes for Women" sounded almost tame:

"In spite of the fact that there is an agitation for giving votes to women which is national in its scope and unprecedented in its magnitude, and that there is no agitation for Manhood Suffrage, the Government are proposing to give more votes to men and none to women." . . . "By associating Votes for Women with the policy of Manhood Suffrage the Government have made it a party question, while at the same time they refuse to make it a party measure." . . . "The Manhood Suffrage Bill is simply an expedient for wrecking Woman Suffrage and building up a solid wall against the enfranchisement of women. The Manhood Suffrage Bill is not the answer to a demand for votes for men; it is the answer to the demand for votes for women."

We do not forget there were those calling themselves, even thinking themselves, Suffragists, who said that the consternation of the women was without ground, since they had now two chances. But the people in whom great caring had cleared the vision, saw that the Government's move had lost for Woman Suffrage its Unionist and Moderate Liberal support; and realised, moreover, that a mere amendment not backed by the Government must also be lost for reasons having nothing to do with favour or disfavour towards Woman Suffrage, and everything to do with keeping contentious measures out of the path of Home Rule.

A call went out from the Militant Headquarters summoning women to meet at Caxton Hall on November 21st,

and to volunteer for a deputation which should endeavour to interview the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to lay before them the views held by a large section of women in respect of the new crisis which the Government had precipitated.

A letter signed by one of the chief officers of the Union (Mrs. Pethick Lawrence) acquainted the Prime Minister with this design. On six previous occasions the same sort of communication had been made, and had been either evaded, or ignored, with the now well-known consequences. In response, apparently, to the storm of indignation which had greeted the Government's franchise proposal, the Prime Minister replied to Mrs. Lawrence's letter, that he and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had arranged to receive a deputation from various Suffrage Societies on November 17th, and would like to know "whether it is the intention of your society to be represented." The reply was, of course, in the affirmative. On the day appointed half a dozen members of the W.S.P.U., with Mrs. Lawrence and Miss Christabel Pankhurst as spokeswomen for the Union, appeared with the deputation received at Downing Street. Representatives of Constitutional Societies adopted, as usual, a more conciliatory tone, but the majority of the women present at this interview left Downing Street under a sense of profound discouragement. They asked themselves what less (in view of his publicly given pledge) could the Prime Minister have said than he did say? His speech in reply to the various delegates left the subject precisely where he found it—in very evil case. For persons not content to see Woman Suffrage so left, the question was: What next?

All the previous great meetings, the campaigns of peaceful propaganda, had not been noticed by (were perhaps not even known to) a Government which considered a political abuse unworthy of serious attention unless such abuse presses upon electors. The Prime Minister's step into the hornets' nest of Manhood Suffrage, the

previous week, was the final proof of how little the Government was in touch with a great section of public feeling on the Woman Question. Personally, I am quite sure that had he foreseen the effect of that step, he would not have taken it at so critical a moment. He reminded the deputation that he had said the same thing about Franchise Reform three and a half years ago. But three and a half years ago the threatened injustice was three and a half years distant, instead of imminent. Above all, three and a half years ago there was no Conciliation Bill towards which he had assumed responsibilities to be fulfilled "in the letter and in the spirit." That the untimely revival of a Manhood Suffrage Bill at this particular crisis had changed the whole aspect of the Woman's Franchise struggle was attested by the public utterances of Suffragists and of Anti-Suffragists of all parties. As witness: the finding of *The Parliamentary Committee for Adult Suffrage*, that of the *Unionist Members of Parliament opposed to Woman Suffrage*, that of the *New Constitutional Society for Woman Suffrage;* attested, too, by Mrs. Humphry Ward, speaking at Salisbury "against"; by Lord Robert Cecil, speaking at Hitchin "for"; by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald; by Sir J. Rees, and a cloud of other witnesses besides.

In the face of all this, I repeat that I am certain the Prime Minister did not fully realise when he made his Manhood Suffrage pronouncement that he was acting contrary to the spirit of his pledge to us—another of the many proofs that to the importance, and the urgency, of the Woman Suffrage claim no clear and consistent thinking had been brought by the Government.

The fact that the Prime Minister had changed the face of affairs he himself tacitly admitted when, in the House a few days previously (and again to the deputation), he spoke of the Conciliation Bill as a measure whose very promoters might *now* not care to press—this Bill, to safeguard and to serve which every Suffrage Society in the kingdom has strained every nerve for many, many months.

Who could hope that our audience of the Prime Minister had helped us? He said that he was impressed by the speeches. But to impress even such a past master as the Prime Minister with a capacity to make good speeches was not the aim of those who spoke.

With unwillingness, with profound regret, many of us realised that morning that more had been done to win understanding, and effectual support, for Woman Suffrage by those companies of women who from time to time had set off to Westminster and who did *not* see the Prime Minister, than was accomplished to-day by those who did see him.

For it was an open secret that although the Bill, to which the Government had been induced to promise facilities, went out to the world under the names of a committee of men, its immediate authors were Mrs. Brailsford and Lady Constance Lytton. The spirit that breathed the breath of life into the Conciliation Bill was not born in a committee-room. It was born in the turmoil of the street, and nurtured in the solitude of prison.

Women had waited in vain to hear, through the chorus of indignation against the Manhood Suffrage measure, any voice raised in their behalf among those in power. The silence of their friends was said to be the result of the tradition of Cabinet solidarity. Ministers must apparently endorse even those acts which they deplore. Now to do that seems to the simple feminine mind a misuse, a debasement of loyalty. But if "Cabinet solidarity" had this numbing effect upon our official champions, all the more imperative in some women's ears sounded the question: What shall we do next? The answer given by the W.S.P.U. was reiteration of the call to a public meeting on the following Tuesday.

Several hundred members of the W.S.P.U., being persuaded of the serviceability of an unprecedented demonstration of the resentment roused by the Manhood Suffrage Bill, went out from Caxton Hall on November 21st and smashed official windows in Whitehall and elsewhere.

Two hundred and twenty women and three men were arrested. A great deal of ink was spilt, and much breath wasted, in misrepresenting the cause of the raid and the character of the raiders.

The problem for non-raiders thereupon changed its face. It became: How shall those of us who acted according to our best light in abstaining, avoid the pitfall of justifying ourselves by dint of condemning others who acted according to their best light in joining the raid?

No people should be so careful as Suffragists to avoid the mistake of demanding a uniformity of thought and policy amongst women which no one requires (or, at least, has ever got) from the opposite sex. If women are to be left free to follow as various lines of faith and works as men are, then women must also be left free to pursue the ultimate goal in whatever way best accords with individual character and experience. If she is wrong, she pays her penalty. Sometimes she pays her penalty if she is right. Needless to say, the Suffragette raiders paid heavily in the courts, in the prisons, in the Press.

In face of the judgments on the women, far harsher than those pronounced upon men doing infinitely more damage under infinitely less provocation, witness-bearing became the duty of those women who had not broken windows, but who were under no misunderstanding about the motives of the women who had done so. One of the wisest commentaries on the event came from outside the Union. Speaking of the latest window-smashing raid, Lady Betty Balfour said: "It has nothing in common with hooliganism or mere rebellion for selfish ends. It can never constitute a danger to the State, even if it should lead to bloodshed, because the essence of it is the existence of a spirit without which no State could continue to be great and influential. . . ."

Meanwhile, the pledges given by Suffragist members of the Cabinet to keep the Constitutionals quiet, in particular the wide publicity given to the promise of certain Ministers that they would make a great campaign for

Woman Suffrage throughout the country—began to have an effect upon the atmosphere of the Cabinet. Posters proclaimed "A Cabinet Crisis over Votes for Women." "The Suffrage question," said one paper, "may represent the Waterloo of Mr. Asquith's career." The "Daily Telegraph" said: "There is deep misgiving as to the probable effect of this momentous question upon Ministerial fortunes." In the opinion of the "Evening Times" "the division in the Cabinet may lead to the break-up of the Radical party."

Then it was that persons calling themselves friends of the Suffrage, but chiefly concerned to rescue the Prime Minister from his difficulty, suggested the Referendum as a way out of the difficulty. This device, when previously urged as a means of settling questions dear to the hearts of politicians, had been hotly denounced. The widespread future use of the Referendum seems not unlikely to commend itself. But the machinery by which it is to work is yet to be tried in England. Neither Liberal nor Conservative Government has yet applied it to any party measure. That it should have been seriously considered as a means of easing the Suffrage tension was merely one more proof of the difficulty politicians find in applying to so-called "woman's affairs" the same arguments and principles which they apply to measures initiated by men.

The suggestion of introducing this untried device further to entangle and delay Woman Suffrage increased rather than lessened the tension, and not only as between the practical and the theoretical Suffragists.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" said:

"The cloud, no bigger than a woman's hand, that heralded a depression which has since overspread the whole Ministerial host, has developed a chilly and paralysing atmosphere that has found its way into the innermost recesses of No. 10 Downing Street."

The "Observer" reiterated its view

"that from the Suffrage imbroglio none but a damaging exit is possible, and that this problem is bound to exert

a stronger influence upon political destinies than is yet even remotely realised by most politicians."

"The Times," in all the solemnity of a leading article, had said:

"It is daily becoming more evident that the question of Woman Suffrage threatens to produce an acute political crisis."

But not at all. A man might risk the life of a ministry for Home Rule; he might leave the Cabinet on a question of Tariff Reform; but what was Woman Suffrage that a Minister should put himself out for that!

Through the medium of the King's Speech the Government, in February, reiterated its determination to proceed with the programme of Franchise amendment and the Registration of Electors. This might be construed so as to cover the Manhood Suffrage proposals, or merely a Plural Voting Bill. No one could pretend it had anything to do with Government responsibility towards women.

Yet, as Mr. Lloyd George had admitted, if women were to vote at the next General Election, their Bill must needs be carried in this session in order to secure the benefit of the Parliament Act.

. . . . . .

Spring had come without bringing any serious attempt by persons in power to advance the Woman's Cause. Many Suffragists who had refrained from joining the demonstration of the previous November, came, in February, to feel that a sign must be given of their dissatisfaction with an advocacy so tepid, a championship so easily discouraged.

On March 1st a Suffrage raid resulted in the destruction of thousands of pounds' worth of plate-glass, and the arrest of Mrs. Pankhurst and of over a hundred other women. On the following evening a vast crowd responded to the women's invitation bidding the populace to Parliament Square. The police were prepared for this demon-

stration, of which full notice had been given. Nevertheless, further damage was done to property. More women were arrested. Nearly two hundred were now in prison. The treatment meted out to these political offenders in the courts and in the gaols, the fact that many women were permanently disabled and a man Suffragist imprisoned in Pentonville had been driven insane by forcible feeding, threw into sharper relief the treatment meted out to disturbers of the peace who were not advocates of Woman Suffrage. The historian of the future will hardly find ground for surprise in setting down the fact that in the face of all this the temper of the Militants was hardening. A change in the character of their protests, which had been indicated in November, became yet more marked in March. Cabinet Ministers went about the country under a greater vigilance of police protection.

XVI

LETTER TO "THE TIMES"

MARCH 7TH, 1912

To the Editor.

SIR,—Among the mass of printed comment from Anti-Suffrage sources, which has come under one's eyes in the last six years, your leader of yesterday is probably the most enlightened. Here at last we have a consideration of causes, not merely of symptoms.

You will not find all men agree that "when enthusiasm brings about a tragedy, there is some error latent in it, however fine its cause may be." To agree to this would be to admit that nothing the world has gained has been worth its price of sorrow. The truth seems to be that the greater good may seldom, in an imperfect world, be bought with any other coin. The amount of attendant tragedy is, we admit, a measure of imperfection. But not always in the enthusiasm. History shows how the sorrier imperfections have been exhibited in the means employed to kill enthusiasm. The harsher means have always failed, when the enthusiasm was great enough in enough people to face obloquy and suffering.

Since you, Sir, are not blind to some of the subtler forces behind the Suffrage agitation, can you not help to make clear the fact that, whether for good, as we think, or for ill, the Woman Suffrage Movement has tapped those deep reservoirs of spiritual devotion and consecrated selflessness from which the world has, from the beginning, drawn its moral and religious strength?

The truth is that the ideal for which Woman Suffrage stands has come, through suffering, to be a religion. No other faith held in the civilised world to-day counts so many adherents ready to suffer so much for their faith's sake. Why not try to realise what this means? For to realise it will shorten a bitter time.

We know that some who are not ignorant of the causes behind the recent outbreak nevertheless maintain that for the authorities to treat with those who have defied the law would be wholly without precedent. Such a contention loses sight of the object-lesson offered by the former law-breaker, now law-maker, and chosen colleague of the Prime Minister; loses sight of the attitude, of authorities and public alike, towards General Botha; loses sight of the collective evidence of the past. Yet we are told that because some glass has been broken, any show of understanding, or consideration, towards Militant Suffragists would involve a menace to the foundations of civilisation.

The women's answer to that is that they are fighting against the real, not a fancied menace, and fighting for a less imperfect civilisation.

But perhaps even those who think their own opposition to Militant Suffragism is founded on love of law and order, even they may yet ask themselves if they may reasonably hope that the little mops of the magistrates or the bigger broom of the superior court will keep back this tide. Does anyone seriously think that the hundreds of imprisonments, the forcible-feeding torture, the death and insanity already to the credit (?) of the policy of repression have had their intended effect? And yet towards this forty-year-old demand, with half the House of Commons on its side and more than half the Cabinet, the Government's only change from an attitude of cynical neglect is to stronger methods of repression.

The Prime Minister, whose ignorance of the deeper forces at work is still very great, welcomed yesterday the newest of these methods proposed by a Member of Parliament—a Bill to make the recent damage done chargeable to the funds of the society to which the agitators belong. Does he really think that, if he should be able to make forfeit those funds (of which the greater part represents sixpence by sixpence faith and self-denial such as has no parallel elsewhere in the world)—does the Prime Minister seriously think such a course will put an extinguisher on the Suffrage candle?

Rather it will blow the flame to conflagration. And you, Sir (I say it with all respect), will not be able wholly to free yourself from responsibility in the misreading of the situation on the part of officials —isolated each in the engrossing business of his

special department, and yet called on to take action in a matter whose significance has been obscured and whose meaning has been travestied by the Press. The Prime Minister, in the absence of first-hand knowledge, proposes, he says, to consult the Attorney-General. Let him rather send out some impartial observer to report faithfully the breadth and depth of this disaffection. He will perhaps carry back some idea of the "mandate" left behind by the woman who has gone to prison, the woman whom 40,000 others followed through the London streets last June in token of their adhesion to the governing aim of her life. That assurance she has sent from prison of an "inexhaustible supply" was no vain boast.

You were shocked and astonished at the broken glass. I assure you that many of us have come to read of broken glass with an intensity of relief.

Some of our opponents told us long ago to what the agitation would lead. We scouted the idea—out of faith in the wisdom and right feeling of men, not from any doubt of how far women would go in pursuit of an end beside which penal servitude itself is slight and negligible.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

ELIZABETH ROBINS.

March 5.

TIME TABLE

To March 22nd, 1912

On the evening of March 5th the authorities in their turn made a raid. The offices of the Women's Social and Political Union at Clement's Inn were invaded, overhauled, and Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence arrested on the charge of "conspiring to incite certain persons to commit malicious damage to property." Of the three other persons named in the warrant, Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Tuke were already in prison, on the lesser charge in connection with the window-breaking of the previous week, and Miss Christabel Pankhurst could not anywhere be found.

The way in which the regular staff and outside friends of the Union related themselves to the changed conditions thus brought about showed that though the last half-dozen years' work had not yet won political freedom, it had won for the women who stood closest to the Union a certain freedom of soul. In the midst of the profound excitement created by the clean sweep effected by the Government, with newsboys crying, "Conspiracy Charge!" in the streets, opponents jubilating over "the death-blow" dealt to the forward faction, and predicting fresh arrests—up there, high above those voices, in the midst of premises ransacked and rifled, visitors to Clement's Inn the next morning found the offices open as usual, heads of departments at their posts, and an undismayed activity reigning. From outside, offers of aid—personal and financial—were pouring in, and the work of the

Union was going forward with an earnestness and efficiency greater even than common.

And the quiet of it all! The indifference to the probable wider casting of that net which had enmeshed the bigger fish. Now that the Pethick Lawrences were in prison, the leader writer of the paper and director of the policy of the Union was the arch-conspirator on whom the law had failed to lay its hands. No secret was ever better kept than her place of concealment. An acting editor of distinguished ability and rare devotion was instantly produced in the person of Miss Evelyn Sharp. At her suggestion others who did not usually write for the paper were called upon to help in the crisis. Persons who did this were repeatedly warned of their foolhardiness. By associating themselves with a society under the ban of the Government, a society whose leaders were about to be tried before the High Court on a charge of conspiracy, friends and helpers of the Women's Social and Political Union laid themselves open to a similar indictment. The probable truth of this was generally admitted. No one was heard to deny it. But the only change in the aspect of affairs inside the Union was an increased devotion to its service, and an even greater disregard of possible consequences to the individual.

Such fear as the Government's action had evoked was confined to persons outside the Union. Cabinet Ministers went doubly guarded, and sentences of hard labour, intended to intimidate, were pronounced on women for breaking a few shillings' worth of glass. Three hundred women were now behind prison bars. The British Museum, the Royal Academy, and the Royal United Service Institution were closed for the publicly assigned reason—fear of what the Militants might do. This dread extending under the influence of panic to what the Militants might say, carried certain Suffragist Members of Parliament clean out of their true course. In the House of Commons and in the Press, public notice was given that for fear the Militants would take any vote

given now in favour of the Suffrage as a sign that Militant tactics had succeeded—the vote about to be cast would be against the Conciliation Bill. And this, in spite of the fact that under the transformed conditions created by the Government's "Manhood" proposals, the Conciliation Bill had been opposed and denounced by the Militants.

But politicians have not yet thought enough about Woman Suffrage to avoid these glaring inconsistencies. Part of the service done by Militancy was to elicit such inconsistencies and to make other people, if not their authors, recognise them.

XVII

THE PERFIDY OF SYMPATHISERS

Published in "Votes for Women," March 22nd, 1912

THERE are Suffragists who have been at a loss, up to the last few days, to detect the smallest service done by recent Militancy.

These persons owe to such "sympathisers" as Sir William Byles the knowledge of disguises torn away, and pretences shattered by the events of the last three weeks.

Personally, I do not believe that Mrs. Pankhurst, in her most militant mood, would have ventured to foretell so ironic a proof of the untrustworthiness of politicians as has been offered to the world in the threats of withdrawal on the part of certain friends —"up till now."

Not the words of Mr. Hobhouse at Bristol, not Lord Haldane's contempt for the more patient policy of pinpricks, nothing that has yet been said, sheds so much light on the meaning of Militancy as the spectacle of these lesser "Sympathisers" finding in broken glass an excuse for breaking promises.

We have had, to be sure, Lord Lytton's commentary: "Members of Parliament are just as hysterical as women, lose their heads just as readily,

and are just as apt to fly to extremes upon the smallest provocation."

And still, many a Suffragist has read the papers with astonished eyes, taking in, only gradually, the fact that here was proof upon proof of a truth veiled before from all but the more astute.

The simpler-minded are learning not a little from the object-lesson afforded by the spectacle of these champions, tumbling over one another, in their haste to run away from a great principle—which we would have thought they would be all the stauncher to defend, the more they honestly thought that principle endangered.

One of the greatest difficulties the Suffrage leaders have had to deal with has been the problem of how to prevent their followers from being lulled into a false security; how to guard the rank and file from reposing a too implicit confidence upon politicians content to call themselves friends, and "leave it at that."

The difficulty presented by this deadlock is fast disappearing. A touchstone has been applied which enables the Suffragist, with an irrefragable certainty, to detect the pinchbeck in politieal sympathy from the gold.

The simplicity which I have admitted has not been all on the side of women.

The "Pall Mall Gazette" of March 6th was so good as to tell us who those were who had been "driven into the Anti-Suffrage camp by the window-smashing."

They were "those who were lukewarm."

Another paper says: "Hitherto the mass of men have listened to the appeal of women for votes with *kindly toleration*" (the italics mine). The paragraph ends: "There are ominous signs, however."

These signs and omens are precisely such as were needed by, as I say, the more confiding type of Suffragist. Many a woman has come with difficulty, and only in these last two weeks, to see that with a certain number of men (a small number, we are glad to believe) the promise to support Woman Suffrage bore no relation to conviction on the subject.

Not patience alone has suffered by that discovery, but the respect which we find no difficulty in feeling for straightforward opponents.

Much has been made of the surface differences between the Suffrage camps. Yet we are at one not only in the prime article of our faith. We take precisely the same view of the perfidy of "friends" both in and out of the House of Commons.

Members of the W.S.P.U. are the first to say that, if punishment of all Suffragists for the militant acts of a section represents men's idea of fairness—it certainly does not represent women's.

The carrying out of these poor threats will be taken by the W.S.P.U., and ultimately by the public, as further justification of that cumulative distrust of the so-called friends of the Suffrage, and that cumulative abhorrence of bad faith which lately found public expression.

Many women feel an unconquerable, vicarious shame on looking into the record of certain of our "friends."

Leaving out of count the more flagrant cases of bad faith, we find that Members of Parliament seem to think themselves active in our behalf, even generous, almost daring, when they have repeated the forty-year-old conviction: Women should be represented as well as taxed.

But when the mere iteration of that conviction has come to sound damnable in ears strained to catch the logical conclusion—when women have shown they are not as content, as men seem, with talking and writing about reform—when, casting about for some means to force a skulking "sympathy" into the open, women succeed at last in driving such sympathisers first out of hiding, and ultimately out of the field, they find they have done the next best thing to making an honest friend.

What remains to be found out is not someone's opinion of militant methods as a means of drawing public attention to an urgent matter too long neglected—though few will say that end has not been achieved. What tens of thousands of women want to know is: How much verifiable foundation was there for the belief in the bad faith of certain "supporters"?

The world has already seen with what amazing celerity certain gentlemen have sprung forward to answer that question with public justification of the worst suspicions of the Militants.

The Suffragist Member of Parliament who finds an excuse for his supineness in women's impatience with that very defect in him, the man who cries out: "Look at me, while I wriggle out of my pledge

through a hole in the window!"—owes the public an explanation of why he ever gave himself the trouble to endorse a principle which, by his own confession, means for him so little.

Did he endorse Woman Suffrage because he thought he might count on ample time to fondle the theme in public, and to attitudinise on platforms as the champion of woman? Or was he a Suffragist because he felt sure that never would any woman be a Suffragist in stark earnest—as passionate for freedom as a man?

However he may answer these questions, he may rest assured that the "sympathiser" who at this crisis withdraws his support will be recognised for what he is.

One of the hopeful things about the coming of women into public affairs is that women are not hypnotised by party shibboleths, nor blinded to plain issues because those issues are given misleading names.

Nothing so surprises women, nothing so shames humanity in their eyes, as the shifts and insincerities certain public men permit themselves.

In the face of men's shoulder-shrugging at our ignorance of politics and law, few women will be found to envy the erudition and experience which enable that eminent publicist, Prof. Dicey, for instance, to acknowledge without shame his hope that those of his sex who have endorsed the principle of Woman Suffrage have endorsed that principle without being convinced of its justice or concerned to see justice done.

Without contradiction, Prof. Dicey was represented by the Press last autumn as saying: "It is idle to count up the number of M.P.'s nominally pledged to the principle of Woman Suffrage. I refused to be imposed upon by the political fiction that all these pledged M.P.'s have made up their own minds to sanction the most novel, and one of the most hazardous, of social and political experiments."

Truly, Militancy beside that seems not only respectable, but austerely moral.

Certain critics of the W.S.P.U., knowing that the trifling and insincerity of politicians was the root cause of the Militant outbreak, now represent the Union as rejoicing over the latest illustration of the ground for distrust. If that supposed view of the Militants is to be justified to the full, let more, and yet more, of our "friends" in Parliament show to the world the base metal of their support.

TIME TABLE

MARCH 22ND–28TH, 1912

A CONDITION of grave industrial unrest had for weeks been a cause of profound uneasiness to employers of labour, to the Government, and to the general public. Not only in English collieries, but in Scotland, and notably in Wales, the discontent of the miners had culminated in a practically universal strike. Mills and furnaces were shut down, blacklegs who attempted to open them were mobbed and mauled, industry was paralysed. Great employers of labour, and their representatives in the Press, were urging the Prime Minister to employ the troops in coercion. Instead of doing that, Mr. Asquith, disregarding the passionate adjuration of the capitalist class, laboured without ceasing to frame some compromise which would meet the demands of a great body of workmen armed with voting powers. Vested interest redoubled its denunciation of the Prime Minister, and pointed ironically to the reasons for his action. These were rated at sixty-seven, that being the number of seats controlled by miners' votes. Meanwhile, from platform and Press came demands for the arrest of the demagogues who were inciting the strikers to violence. But male inciters were left at large.

The voice of privilege was also raised to advocate confiscation of those Trade Union funds which kept the strike alive. "The Times" said:

"The whole subject assumes a new aspect when organisations and funds are used to stop or paralyse the

entire trade of the country; when crowds are made destitute, and when, as must happen, mortality and disease must increase."

Then from Durham a different note. A Justice of the Peace wrote to the Press:

". . . We read that a number of women have been arrested on warrants charged with 'conspiracy to commit wilful damage to property.' In the same issue, under the heading of 'Strikers' Terrorism,' you state that hundreds of miners at Tarbran Colliery, in Midlothian, armed with sticks, waited at the pithead for the men working underground, and threatened if they did not cease work they would be thrown into Cobbinshaw Loch, and they were forced to return home.

"Now this is a gross offence against the liberty of the subject, and a far more serious crime than any attack on private property and smashing of windows, yet I do not see any trace of the Treasury having issued warrants against these ruffians. I presume the reason is that the miners have votes and the women have not, and that the law is to be enforced against the non-voter while the voter can defy it with impunity."

This distinction, long clear to Suffragists, was further emphasised by "The Times'" suggestion of penal servitude for the Suffragist leaders whose case was still *sub judice*. The editorial added: "It remains also to be seen whether the law cannot reach those who, behind the scenes, plan and provide funds for these demonstrations."

There was no secret about the contributors to the Women's Social and Political Union. The published list would have furnished a very pretty basis of indictment had the numbers and the character of the contributors not damped the ardour of official reprisal. Mr. Bodkin had much to say at Bow Street in stating the case for the prosecution about "aiding and abetting"—which apparently could be done to a degree legally indictable by the appearance of sympathisers at W.S.P.U. meetings (!), and by their mere sitting there without protest whilst

others preached rebellion. Since this expert opinion was listened to without protest by the other men of the law present, Mr. Bodkin's view of the law must be supposed to have done no violence to the law.

Members of the Union looked daily for further arrests in pursuance of the policy of intimidation. But the authorities had their hands full. No new arrests were made. A rumour was diligently spread that, for clemency's sake, bygones would be bygones. But from this time forward, whoever ventured to speak in favour of, or subscribe a penny to, the Women's Social and Political Union, would be dealt with according to the law of conspiracy. There was no assurance whatever that this was not true. A good many women who had not themselves broken windows or tried to force a way into the Commons, must have found in this threat a call to bear witness to their conviction that the impatience of Suffragists was justified.

On the evening of March 28th, when the Conciliation Bill was once more under debate in the House of Commons, a meeting was held at the Albert Hall by the Women's Social and Political Union. In the space of a few minutes, £10,000 was subscribed to the Fighting Fund.

XVIII

AT THE ALBERT HALL

MARCH 28TH, 1912

Miss Kenney, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I rise for the purpose of seconding the resolution.

No one, of however little authority, can speak in public at a time like this without a sense of responsibility.

That sense has taken some of us in these last days to the police-courts. We watched, as the evidence piled up, facts emerge which the prosecution had not intended to bring out. We saw evidence of the new solidarity among women; glimpses of that resolve which has so perplexed the easy-liver, the resolve not to acquiesce any longer in certain evils which the mass of men leave untouched; some evils the mass of men do not want mentioned; evils which many men would like the happier women not even to know. Well, those evils are beginning, *only beginning*, to be understood; and that is the reason the prisons are filling.

I spoke of responsibility. Those of us who have spent days in court and in visiting His Majesty's

prisons, are not likely to feel our sense of responsibility lessened.

But I think we are in better cheer about Woman Suffrage than any others, perhaps, who have that Cause at heart.

I wish everyone here, instead of listening to me, might have shared in my illumination. I wish you had seen Mrs. Pankhurst! Try to imagine her, waiting over two weeks for facilities to prepare her defence—facilities freely given to the swindler and the fomenter of a devastating war. Imagine the magistrate telling Mrs. Pankhurst last week that he had no power to grant facilities. Imagine the magistrate telling her this week that she had nothing to complain of, as she now had those facilities; although the fact was, that by a series of, let us say, misunderstandings between the Home Office and the prison authorities, the prisoner was still without facilities. Let us have this quite clear. We are not urging anything we cannot substantiate. Either the Home Office was misinformed, or the prison authorities misinterpreted the order. The point is that Mrs. Pankhurst was still without those facilities. When, on two separate days, she rose in court and told the magistrate the facts, what was his answer? "*Next case!*"

I wish you had seen Mrs. Lawrence! Best of all is to see her here.[1] But whether in prison or in the

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, to the great surprise of the public and even of their closest friends, had been released on bail that afternoon, and though prohibited from taking any part in the meeting, they sat upon the platform.

dock, she was an object-lesson in calmness for excited editors and hysterical doctors.[1]

If you had seen Mrs. Tuke, you would have seen a woman obviously very ill, as obviously unbroken in spirit.

I wish as much as anything that you could have come to see the man we are all proud to call our friend—the man who for the sake of this Cause has been in Brixton Prison. Members of the Union do not need to be told that sex-antagonism is not active among us, whatever may be the case elsewhere. Of few things are we so proud as the sort of friendship men have shown this Union. What other Suffrage Society has had its aims so kept before the House of Commons? What other body of women can boast men friends who are ready to give up personal ambition, to sacrifice money, peace of mind, to risk life and limb? This Union has such friends. But if not for the wider gratitude we owe to men, no member of the Union but will be able to renew her faith in brotherhood by thinking of Mr. Lawrence.

These last days, then, have emphasised the fact that the authorities are trying to crush a spirit that is indomitable. We were told that the Militants "miscalculated" the anger and resentment they had aroused. No, not "miscalculated"—for their calculating was occupied with another problem. They are indifferent to anger and resentment. When a section of the public comes to that frame of mind, the situation is serious. Those who love

[1] That morning had appeared Sir Almroth Wright's ill-famed letter to "The Times."

law and order owe more than they are aware to the Militant leaders. You know the acts the leaders have sanctioned. *You do not know the deeds they have prevented.*

The authorities have withdrawn the leaders. A body of people, inflamed by a sense of injustice, is left without those captains to whose direction the rank and file are accustomed to look.

Well, that, too, is a responsibility. For the essence of this agitation is that patience in the eyes of certain women has not only ceased to be a virtue—it has ceased to be decent. You may choose to be patient in bearing your own misery; but *is* patience in bearing other people's misery so fine a thing that you must maltreat those who refuse?

And when you have maltreated them, what then? The agitation will go on. The Suffrage forces, as we have seen, can be led from dock and prison. They can be inspired by a leader not only out of *our* sight. A leader with the power of making herself invisible to all her enemies, and very present to all her friends,—that spirit of air and fire called Christabel. The warrant to arrest her has given her seven-league boots—has given her wings. She has obviously been in Persia. At least so I gather from the late Financial Agent to that Government. He has been telling an audience in America of the extraordinary service to the cause of liberty recently given by Persian women. They have been not only the sustaining—they have been the active, the "militant" force. That word militant gave the secret away. We were prepared after that

to hear the Financial Agent say he had never seen those ladies' faces. They always wore their veils. One was probably a motor-veil.[1]

The wandering spirit of Militancy is bolder when she reaches China. You heard what she was doing there last week. "The Times" has told us how the Chinese Suffragettes had all of a sudden grown dissatisfied with the lukewarm approval of Votes for Women recently ratified by the National Assembly at Nanking. If we failed to recognise the accent of that dissatisfaction, we should have recognised the hand in what followed. The Chinese Suffragettes, says "The Times," broke the windows, mauled the guards, and finally terrorised the Assembly, although soldiers had been called in for protection. The account ends by saying the debate on Women's Suffrage had to be reopened. Is not the inference clear?

There is no country in Europe unvisited by this wandering spirit. To its effect upon America I can testify. There, without any slavish copying of method, the Americans have taken fire from the English torch. The flames have spread from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. No fair-minded person can deny that the women of those two great states, the State of Washington and the State of California, owe their political freedom to the New Spirit—the spirit typified for us in the name of Christabel. [Cheers.] And this spirit that ranges the hemispheres is going to be shut up in Holloway Prison!

[1] In the many rumours of Miss Pankhurst having been seen here, there, and yonder, she was usually described as wearing a motor-veil.

While we are gathered here certain persons in "another place" are also making speeches. One difference between them and us is that with the power to do so much more, "friends" in that other place have rested content with making speeches about Woman Suffrage for over forty years! Oh, how much more those gentlemen must *like* making speeches than women do! And we know those speeches. All the way from Westminster to Kensington we can hear them. The academic arguments in favour; the more passionate objections against. What are they in essence, those objections?

Called by a dozen names, they may be summed up in one. *Fear!*

Fear has had much to do with retarding justice. The Tories are "afraid" the majority of women may turn Radical.

The Liberals are "afraid" of the well-known Conservative element in women.

Your Indian administrators are "afraid" of what the subject races will think of the superior race.

Your very soldier is not ashamed to own himself "afraid"—afraid of women's love of peace.

The peace-lover is "afraid" of her susceptibility to military glory.

Afraid! Afraid! As I have said, fear was our pitfall, too. And that is why we do well to emphasise the greatest victory gained so far in this fight. What is our greatest victory? Our greatest victory is the victory over fear. We learned, at last, where to look for our worst enemies. Not in the House of Commons. Not in the House of Lords. Not in

the Anti-Suffrage League. Not even in the inert mass of the unawakened. Our worst enemies are those which walk in that dark legion recruited out of our own fears. These enemies have a hundred disguises to deceive. When we have beaten them off the ground of our own individual danger, they reappear under the cloak of our genuine fear for others. We have to remember that in the long climb up from barbarism, Courage was always leading us on—Cowardice was always dragging us back. There is nothing so paralysing in its effect, nothing so dehumanising as fear. It is the father of cruelty. In the early days of all the races of the earth—before the altar where the human sacrifice lay bleeding, crouched that figure of Fear. When patriot men had driven it out of their hearts, when the better thinkers found that the dominant world-force was not malevolent, but benevolent—still the great mass of women, being shut out from that wider knowledge which is experience, not allowed to face the common enemies of society in the open—women became, as those who hide and evade must always become, the special prey of fear.

Well, a great breach has been newly made in fear's last stronghold. We may fairly doubt if ever before, in so short a time, so many fears have been slain. To have routed that dark host, to have found (as hundreds and hundreds of women have) that *they cannot any more be made afraid*—that is the outstanding victory. I do not mean that they no longer shrink from some specific act. I mean far more. I mean that, however they decide to conduct their

campaign, they are delivered from the old tyranny of dreading pains and penalties.

I should like to say that I feel there is a very steadying quality in this fearlessness. It has nothing in common with that miscalled courage which breaks out in any cruel fashion. It is too full of confidence for that—and of confidence too well placed. Nothing but doubt of our sure triumph, *only despair* could deaden the minds of women to the sanctity of human life. For any of us, who think we understand the value of life, to seem to join with those who hold life cheap would be to desert our colours. We should be resurrecting that fear which we had buried.

One last instance of the tyranny of fear, and I have done. A Cabinet Minister who seemed to be "almost persuaded" asked in private some time ago why England should be the first Great Power to try this great experiment. One could only say that it seemed natural that the Mother of Parliaments should lead the way. But I had better authority than I knew. I might have answered in the terms of that proud boast of Milton's—and I do not believe the passion of patriotism has ever found finer expression—"It would not" (Milton said)—"it would not be the first nor the second time since our Ancient Druides . . . that England hath had this honour vouchsafed from Heaven: *to give out Reformation to the world.*"

TIME TABLE

March 28th–April, 1912

The debate on the revised Conciliation Bill had been postponed in order that the Government might continue its earnest, its passionate attempt at a sympathetic settlement of the miners' claims. On the day when the unsatisfactory issue of the arbitration conference was made public a changed Prime Minister appeared in the House. Under obvious physical strain and stress of emotion, Mr. Asquith announced the failure of his efforts to compose the bitter quarrel between employers and employed. The newspapers said the Prime Minister made acknowledgment of this failure with tears in his eyes. He was talking about a situation he had studied closely, a problem to which he had given the best of his insight and evidence-weighing faculty—qualities so conspicuous in him when summoned to the service of men's affairs.

The day which had long been allocated to the Women's Bill was devoted to pressing through the House a measure to enforce by Act of Parliament that "minimum wage" to which the owners of mines and collieries had contemptuously refused assent.

In view of the public exigency, women made no protest at being put off yet again. But they remembered that this was the seventh occasion upon which one Government and another (on previous occasions driven by no such exigency) had taken for other business the day appointed for consideration of a Woman Suffrage Bill.

No charge is so often made against Suffragists as that

of impatience. Yet they were expected to look on, and did look on, while the impatience of men with votes put the country to a cost greater in one day than the sum total in all the years of women's agitation. We remembered that the principle of the minimum wage was a newer, stranger portent on the horizon of the public mind than was the principle of Woman Suffrage. Since 1870 thirty Bills advocating the Suffrage had been discussed in Parliament, and on seven occasions had passed a second reading. But women were "impatient."

Under the goad of men holding in reserve a vote which could decide the fortunes of the Liberal party at the next election, the Government found itself impelled to rush through a piece of legislation so new, radical, and hotly opposed as the Minimum Wage—a measure which no one in power would have introduced at that time for justice' sake, a measure which many men of both parties predicted would deal a death-blow to British trade, and bring about the downfall of the Empire.

In the teeth of opposition the Government forced this measure through the Commons in a few days.

On March 28th the Conciliation (Suffrage) Bill was defeated by Irish Nationalists in co-operation with certain Liberals who had called themselves Suffragists.

The Irish point of view was clear enough. After the last election but one the party in power in the British Parliament had been returned so shorn of strength that the Liberal vote alone was insufficient to keep Liberals in office. Here was the opportunity for which the Irish Nationalists had long been waiting. Long they had stood on the Liberal doorstep, hat in hand. The day was come at last when Liberals must wait on the Irish. Their leader, Mr. John Redmond, was not slow to avail himself of the situation. He was openly greeted (if I remember, in the House of Commons itself) as "Dictator"—not alone of Irish Nationalist politics, but of every move in British "Liberal" legislation.

The subsequent history of the fortunes of Woman

Suffrage in the House was closely involved with the need of the Irish to keep the present Government in power (at least till Home Rule was law), and the sore need on Mr. Asquith's part of Irish support to keep the weakened Liberal majority from extinction. This interdependence had remained after the last election, which saw but a single seat added to the Liberal forces.

Before the significance of Irish influence had been realised by the other Suffrage Societies, an astute emissary of the Women's Social and Political Union returned from Ireland with private information to the effect that Nationalists were regarding the Suffrage question with acute anxiety.

Apart from the fact that, in the case of the Nationalists, long nursing of a major political passion had weakened their interest in other reforms, the notorious disagreement in the British Cabinet between Pro- and Anti-Suffragists intensified Irish dread of the disintegrating influence exercised upon artificial solidarity by this foundation-shaking question. Had the Conciliation Bill, or any other Woman Suffrage measure, been introduced by the Government, or been known to enjoy the favour of the Prime Minister, none so quick as the Irish to support it through thick and thin. As matters stood, Irish concern for a Prime Minister pledged to Home Rule stood tacitly committed to rescue Mr. Asquith from his embarrassment, and to sweep the probable stumbling-block out of the Nationalist path. There is reason to believe that Irish policy in this affair had been cut and dried months before the Conciliation Bill came before the House. Eight months later Lord Robert Cecil asked in Parliament: "How came it about, if the Nationalists had always been free to vote as they pleased on the Women's Franchise question, that some of their number voted against the Conciliation Bill, *and that none of them voted for it?*"

Whereas a straight answer to that question might show the Nationalist view of equity limited, and the

Nationalist sense even of mere expediency at fault, no probing as to the ground of his action towards Suffrage "Conciliation" could be as embarrassing to the Irishman as it would seem to be to his fellow-wreckers—the Liberal "Suffragist" members of Parliament who voted against the Bill. Since they had no such excuse as the Irish, since wearing the Suffragist label they could not admit their distrust and fear of Votes for Women, they must, one would suppose, have some well-considered reason to give for their share in wrecking the Conciliation Bill.

They had a reason, and they gave it: the violent deeds of the Militants.

The tolerance of these gentlemen had moulted no feather before the spectacle of greater violence. The difference between the violent deeds of Militants and the violent deeds of miners is not denied. One difference is: the aim of the Militants was political freedom, the aim of the miners was more money. Another difference lay in the fact that the Militants, to win attention to their claims, threw stones at windows, whereas the miners, to the same end, threw stones at human beings and did grave bodily injury. Another difference: the Militants were lodged in prison for their lesser violence under sentence of hard labour. The miners were not even arrested. "Why not?" asked a member in the House. The Home Secretary, not denying that the strikers had stoned the police, answered: "I hope the hon. gentleman will not mind my saying that I deprecate very much questions which might arouse feelings of anger."

And then people wondered that the friends of those imprisoned women felt an anger before which the so-called "violent deeds" of their sisters took on a different face.

The defeat of the Conciliation Bill of 1910 had been sincerely mourned. The defeat of the Conciliation Bill of 1912 was a foregone conclusion.

XIX

SERMONS IN STONES

Published in the "Contemporary Review," April

THE great majority of Suffragists of all societies are lovers of peace. They believe in peace not as merely a humane sentiment, but as the only sound political economy.

Those who are not taken in by the fallacy, that physical force is the basis of civilised government, are more anxious than the most scandalised official that the evil example of men in revolt should be avoided by women. That is not to say that the most fanatical peace-lover is necessarily blind to the fact, which only sentimentality can ignore—the fact that women are quite as human as men. Women are liable to be pleased and won by fair promises; women are liable to be angered and antagonised by betrayal.

Why not? Hath not a woman eyes? Hath not a woman hands, organs, dimensions, sinews, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, treated by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as her brother is?

The answer should bring us close to thankfulness that, in spite of provocation, women, so far, have not, in their struggle for freedom, emulated the more violent deeds of men. Nevertheless, the Militant Suffragists have succeeded, in the words of "The Times," in bringing about "the marked and profound change which has taken place in public opinion, *which formerly treated the agitation with tolerant amusement.*"

Since that is not only a great achievement, since to do away with tolerant amusement is precisely what the forward party set out to effect, no one can be surprised that the tactics of that party should have roused a passion of opposition never accorded to the milder propaganda. The so-called militant tactics are those which have most seriously embarrassed the opponents of Woman Suffrage. They are the tactics which have rallied the greater numbers, and the larger financial backing, to the Cause. They are tactics which have breathed new life into the very societies which denounce Militancy.

To defend the anti-Government by-election policy, or the interruption of Cabinet Ministers' meetings by persons unable otherwise to record their strong convictions on matters of public importance, would be too easy a task. Let us, therefore, consider those actions yet more bitterly denounced, actions held in many quarters to be not only unpardonable, but inexplicable, as coming from reputable educated women. Looking first at one of the immediate effects of the militant acts, is not the most casual critic given pause, by reflecting that the great body

of respectable women who compose the Social and Political Union have not repudiated these tactics ?

Anyone who wishes to know the sort of women who support the Union has only to look down the columns setting forth the subscribers to the funds. Such examination will show that the sinews for this moral war were provided by working wives and mothers, by doctors and nurses, by painters, musicians, teachers, domestic servants, "great ladies," and a number of the first men in England. The few hundred who are punished and held up to obloquy for doing the militant acts are sustained by the ever-growing army which stands behind, supporting and, if not rejoicing in these deeds, sympathising with the state of mind of which they are the outcome. That would be a superficial power of analysis which should set down this support to delight in lawlessness. In all communities women form the law-abiding section. Exceeding men as they do in most populations—in all prisons, in every reformatory, women are in the minority.

If respectable wives and mothers, girls from the Universities and girls from the mill, stand firm behind the individuals who do the inconvenient and (for themselves) dangerous acts, it is because they understand—as their critics do not yet understand —that although the sum of goodwill now in the world is probably greater than it ever was before, goodwill is ineffectual until it is applied. The need for its "operant power" must be made manifest before it will move. Not active opposition—apathy is the arch-enemy of reform.

At a heavy price (and one does not mean the sum of the plate-glass bill) apathy seems to have been broken.

But by stone-throwing! You shrink from that. Especially you shrink from the thought that the act was committed by women of repute. You may not quite comfortably despise it, whatever your creed or temper. And for this reason: no one can deny the close relationship between a deed and the motive for that deed. The motive here (however mistaken you may judge it) was no ignoble motive. You cannot dissociate character from its expression. And the "character" of these women is held in respect wherever they are best known.

I do not wish to deny that, from the first, the stones have been stones of stumbling to many a good Suffragist. Some soothed their dismay by saying, what is perfectly true, that this movement has grown too big to include only women of philosophic temper. By its universality of appeal to women who know life it has attracted to it, the apologists said, certain reckless spirits, impossible to keep within bounds. And after all (thought some of the women who were most disturbed by the stone-throwing) we know that the need for the reform is so much greater than anyone of us has been able to say, that if it is not to come by quiet means, come it must, even if it comes with tumult. Is it not as well, such women ended by asking themselves, that the mass of men (who are still so ignorant of the movement) should be given this sign? Many

better things have failed. Perhaps the cruder means will be better understood.

There was this in the way of the first stone-throwing being understood. It was the work of only a few isolated cases, people said, of that well-known feminine malady "hysteria." The first stone-throwing had no more significance for most men than any other unrelated instance of disagreeable eccentricity. But when the continued inaction of Suffragist Members of Parliament multiplied these instances of eccentricity by hundreds, there were found at last to be enough of these "departures from the norm" to form a class. Enough to mean something. What it meant was held by certain women, as well as by certain men, to be very terrible.

No more here than elsewhere does any act stand unrelated. Let us glance for a moment, then, at a sequence of events which I have scant space to recapitulate, but of which too many are ignorant. I mean the Woman's Movement of the forty years prior to 1906. After the Liberal leaders' betrayal of the women in 1884 (when it was chivalrously decided that "the women must be thrown overboard to lighten the ship"), the Suffragists of those days fought patiently, quietly, a losing battle. They kept it up for ten years longer, losing ground little by little, till, in 1894, men who were opposed to such share as women had won in local government, seeing the Suffrage Cause had so declined, felt it was safe for its enemies openly to show their hands. And it was safe. When the new County Councils were formed women were shut out of

them. Women were turned off the Education Boards. If, in consequence of all this, women made any protest against such injustice, their protest was not of such a nature as to be heeded, or even to be heard. The fact was that most of those women who had worked longest and most faithfully had now lost heart. The movement languished, and by the general public was forgotten. In the autumn of 1906, at Ladybank, the present Prime Minister, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, when asked what were his views upon the Suffrage, could say publicly that it was a question in which he had formerly taken some interest, but he had not thought about it for fourteen years. Strange as such an utterance would sound now from any Member of the Government, no one felt in 1906 that it probably in the least overstated a responsible Minister's undisturbed indifference to the greatest and most fundamental reform in the history of civilised states. This was the condition of affairs that confronted the younger generation of Suffragists six years ago. They saw how the spirit of the older women had been broken, and they knew in pursuit of what policy this result had come about. They saw that the Cause was not only not going forward, it was going back. The older Suffragists had long been at the end of their resources. For they had tried in vain every "constitutional" means. And there seemed no other.

But there was.

To understand how women justified to themselves the adoption of these other means, we must

recognise that those who knew most about the condition of working-class women and children, not only believed in Woman Suffrage as a general proposition—they were convinced of the urgency of the reform.

To recognise (if only for argument's sake) this urgency, places those who care to understand the movement at the women's point of view. Now, if you believe that you are fighting, not only for the oppressed, but for the final triumph of civilisation, you are ready (for the achievement of ends so momentous) to make some sacrifice. There are women who would even sacrifice a few panes of glass, if the crash of that breaking would break the spell that has bound men under the Upas tree of an evil tradition.

Remember, that in attempting to break this spell women were confronted by an even more difficult task than, for long, they realised. Among other discoveries by the way, women found to their astonishment that men, whether by nature or training, are the less reasonable sex, the more superstitious, the more helpless before custom. Every generation of schoolboys exemplifies this afresh. Whether it is woman's commerce with the child that has kept the great mass of women close to reality and common sense, I do not pretend to know. But there would seem to be ground for thinking that being called on to answer the child's eternal "Why?", woman's recurrent need to give a plain and rational account of conduct to minds as yet untampered with, as yet unmuddled—

this necessity may have kept her own mind clear of much of the rubbish that has been misnamed knowledge, may have kept her sense of proportion true to the great primitive facts of life and love, of suffering and death.

The man, relieved of the necessity constantly to re-envisage life in its simpler, more fundamental aspects, has always tended to make idols of word-spinners. He hypnotises himself with what he calls Philosophy of Life and Science of Government, and is the bondslave of outworn forms. Even in the new republics he makes a fetish of that which should be the simplest, plainest vehicle of justice, namely, the common law. Clogged as it is by all manner of antiquated mummery, man accepts without misgiving, and without humour, this abra-cadabra of ancient forms and ceremonies. He educates a special hierarchy to administer the rites. He will talk to you in the twentieth century of indentures and of seals, though no indenture is now made, and in lieu of wax is a pinked round of scarlet paper. If such matters are trifles, the same cannot be said of other survivals. In trying those grossly misunderstood cases of infant murder, the judge retains the hideous mummery of the black cap and the solemn death-sentence, though he does not any longer expect to have the unhappy woman killed. But the effect upon the victim of social injustice and puerperal mania may be imagined by women, if not by men.

Again and again we have seen how in Parliament an authentic account of gross injustice has left the

legislators' calm unruffled. But if, in her desire to get redress for some intolerable evil, a woman, as actually happened about three years ago, comes unbidden on the floor of the House of Commons, legislators are stirred to their depths by the breach of decorum. The woman is harried out of the place as though she were some unclean, wild animal. One gentleman, reporting the disgraceful scene for the Press, said: "Before anyone had presence enough of mind to stop her, the woman had almost reached"—the reader may well hold his breath and wonder, "reached" Whom, or what Holy of Holies?—"she had almost reached the sacred mace." Yet the woman had come in the name of that which the mace typified. She brought the spirit, and on that occasion bore sole witness to the sanctity of the symbol which, lacking that, is so much silver-gilt.

But one woman's crossing the floor of the House, horrible as was the spectacle, might have been due to mental aberration. What seems to have unnerved the authorities is the idea that not merely one hysterical woman, but hundreds, should, not only offer to the Government that disrespect which it had earned, but should offer violence to property. Men who know the horrors of real war, and in cold blood prepare for it, are unspeakably revolted at the idea of women using what men call "force" —of no matter how innocuous a character, or in any cause, however worthy.

Now, these things are very significant. They give women fresh food for thought. Obviously,

a great many men are not at the beginning of an understanding of whereabouts women are in this matter. Yet we see that historians and statesmen, looking at the great issue of political liberty steadily, see it whole when it applies to their own sex. Mr. Gladstone's words in this connection have been often quoted.[1]

"I am not," said Burke, "of the opinion of those gentlemen who are against disturbing the public repose. I like a clamour whenever there is an abuse. The fire-bell at midnight disturbs your sleep, but it keeps you from being burnt in your bed. The hue and cry alarms the country, but preserves all the property of the province."

When dealing with women's application of these truths, the judicial sex shows lack of a sense of proportion.

The Press, last November, dwelt in a paroxysm of horror upon the fact that, among the women fighting for their freedom, one sent a stone through the window of the Westminster Palace Hotel, where —oh, enormity beyond belief—a Bishop was dining!

The Bishop was quite unhurt.

But, a Bishop! . . . And at dinner, too.

As a Minister of the Crown has reminded us, when men wanted votes they did not interrupt a Bishop's dinner. They burnt down his palace.

Those in authority who, instead of concentrating their energies upon furtherance of a World-Peace, devote their high training, their experience, their

[1] See pages 28–9.

influence to the formation of new army schemes and vaster naval programmes; these people, actively engaged in preparation for war, are amongst those most outraged and aghast if a woman breaks a window. Nevertheless, the woman's act was of the same nature as the breaking of the glass case which must be done before you can ring the fire-alarm. It is the preliminary to warning people of a danger that threatens the community. Precisely so the stone. Not to injure anyone, but by way of sounding an alarm. A thing done to draw attention. How well the women aimed is proved by the result. The stone succeeds where all the other means have failed. Reason, right feeling, statistic array of facts, an amount of constitutional propaganda beyond that at the service of any other franchise reform—proof of these gets no farther than, if so far as, the porches of the officials' ears. The stone cuts them to the heart. The very armament-providers profess a detestation, and they actually feel a great fear of even the symbol of women's rebellion—the symbol being all that women have as yet shown in this agitation.

No creature was hurt by any of those stones. No one was intended to be hurt. In comparison with the measures adopted by men under less provocation, women are still pursuing a policy of pin-pricks, hoping still that a prick, after all, may rouse the men of the nation.

But no one in authority seems yet to have set himself to find out whether behind the awful disorderliness of window-breaking there might be a

desire for a better order. At present all that men can see in it is violence pure and simple. And apparently, from the armament-provider to the jingo "mafficker," your apologist for war will insist that women shall not only stand for peace—they shall stand for his idea of peace. He excuses his own preoccupation with preparations for the slaughter of human beings on a vast scale by saying that all this is done in defence of the home. Women answer, with truth, that the one and only aim that could have brought the Woman's Movement to its present proportions is protection of the home. It is woman's discovery (calling, in truth, for no profundity) that the most obvious objection to armies and navies is that they do not, and cannot, "defend the home" from any of the worser evils.

They are useless allies in that conflict in which uncounted thousands yearly suffer and die. They die for lack of proper housing; for lack of uncontaminated milk; for lack of segregation of contagious diseases; through the absence of State-trained midwives; through the dangerous trades. In the sweat-shops are the struggling legions who do worse than die—they breed disease. And there is the legion who do worse than die in unspeakable dens of infamy.

Innocent childhood and honourable old age, the Holy Places in our pilgrimage—to rescue these from the unbeliever is the goal of the New Crusade.

Among the friends and supporters of the Women's Social and Political Union, not all can submit themselves to a struggle with the police. They see that

there are many ways to work for this reform. Each must do the part which nature and training have made "her part." Not in this field, any more than in the fields of business or of art, are we all fitted for the same service. If we would not suffer that warning pain, characterised by Charlotte Brontë as "the result of estrangement from one's real character," we must act in accordance with our individual nature and qualification. The women do that who help in the less heroic ways. The women who encounter public pains and penalties are accepting the heavier burden. They will have their public reward in the end, as well as, meanwhile, the unfaltering justification of their own conscience and the grateful devotion of their comrades.

For the public must not suppose that, of the Suffragists who stand outside the physical conflict, all of them are pluming themselves upon finer feelings, or a dignity any more sensitive than those who fling themselves against the cordons of Westminster police. Some of the women who feel they cannot do that may know that they would not come out of the ordeal as sane and as unsmirched as we know these other women do. Of such as refrain there may be those who recognise that something of the horror of physical struggle would stain the memory for ever, blurring the good they sought; something of degradation survive a conflict which they lack the power to spiritualise. Not all of us can take it simply enough. Perhaps we are too far away from the worser evils.

Yet such considerations make a poor foundation

upon which to rear a sense of superiority. Those who justify themselves for not bearing a share in the public struggle will not easily justify themselves for making no effort to understand these others who, at such personal cost, are fighting the battle in their way. Unnerving as are the particular scenes under consideration (even to think about), there is in them an implication more unnerving still. For we have here hundreds of women ready to accept the disapproval (and all that may involve), not only on the part of the powers that be, and not only of the general public, but of their dearest friends and staunchest followers—if by that single sacrifice, or any other, they can break through the apathy that makes men and women permit the greater evils that afflict the world.

To speak, in conclusion, of the founder of the Militant Union, she is not in search of martyrdom. So little is she enamoured of sacrifice, that it is precisely her impatience before the useless sacrifice women make which goads her into protest. She would seem to be an economist in means. She will advocate, or herself do, only as much as is necessary to fulfil the end she has in view—that of compelling attention to matters long unregarded.

If you should talk to her of "dignity," is it not conceivable that, thinking still of women broken, and of girls defiled, she would turn upon you with: "Whose dignity?"—and so make my dignity or yours cut a sorry figure weighed in the balance against that womanly dignity she cries out unceasingly to see established on the earth.

Persons of this temper can do without approval. Yet allies they never dreamed of are found upon their side. A philosopher as grave and decorous as Emerson, for instance, with his assurance that "every project in the history of reform, no matter how violent and surprising, is good when it is the dictate of a man's genius and constitution."

Very probably Emerson, as well as Burke and Mr. W. E. Gladstone, might hesitate to include women among mankind.

The Creator seems not to have hesitated.

TIME TABLE

April–June 15th, 1912

After much official opposition and many delays, brought to an end at last by the persistence of Mrs. Pankhurst's friends, she was allowed to leave the prison-cell (to which police-court proceedings had consigned her), in order to prepare her defence before the higher court.

Dr. Ethel Smyth and Dr. Garrett Anderson also had friends whose influence was great enough to secure the release of those ladies. Some two hundred more, lacking this advantage, were still in prison. Failing other help, they presently fell back upon that grim ally, the Hunger Strike. By this means some concession, under Rule 243*a*, was wrung out of the authorities.

The prolonged duel, in prison and out, between the women and the Government, sharpened the contrast in the treatment of women rebelling against intolerable injustice and the treatment of men (leaders and rank and file alike) rebelling against minor wrongs. Opponents of Home Rule for Ireland had become more violent in word and deed. Ulster leaders (or, to be more precise, men living in England and having careers in England, who passed over to Ireland in order to incite a section to rebellion) effected the arming of Irishmen—not with stones and hammers, to smash glass, but with rifles to kill their fellow-creatures. In open defiance of the Unlawful Drilling Act, and under the eyes of the police, Ulster citizens were set practising the arts of warfare. Sir Edward Carson publicly defied the British Government and preached the duty of rebellion. "Your Home

Rule Bill," he declared, " has no moral force, we will not accept it; and as you have treated us with fraud, if necessary we will treat you with force."

Another member of the English Parliament, Mr. F. E. Smith, had already said: ". . . I utterly decline to be bound in my resistance . . . within the strait-waistcoat of constitutional resistance. So far as Home Rule is concerned, I will shrink from nothing," etc. etc.

" Violence," said the " Pall Mall Gazette," " is always deplorable, so is bloodshed. Yet violence and bloodshed in Ulster would be incomparably a smaller misfortune than cowardly acquiescence," etc. etc.

The " Morning Post " echoed: " In a supreme crisis, where the vital interests of the State are at stake, weapons must be used which are not employed in normal and quiet times."

Those who uttered the above opinions were not arrested, and neither were the rioters in Belfast. But those persons who in a lesser degree had put such utterances as the last into practice, were still in prison; and May 15th saw their leaders on trial at the Old Bailey for conspiracy.

The appearance on behalf of the Government of a member of the Government appeared to satisfy men's idea of justice better than it satisfied women's. There was irony, at all events, in the chance which threw the weight of this particular prosecution on the shoulders of a man who believed in the justice of the women's Cause, who appeared to be not insensible to the evidence of unselfish purpose and high moral character in the prisoners, and who, out of his own mouth, had publicly offered explanation and justification of just such acts as these on the score of which he was now urging punishment.

Two years earlier, speaking of the contrast between campaigns for other reforms and that against the Lords' Veto, he had said: " Formerly, when the great mass of the people were voteless, they had to do something violent in order to show what they felt; to-day the elector's bullet is his ballot. Let no one be deceived,

therefore, because in the present struggle everything is peaceful and orderly, in contrast to the disorderliness of other great struggles in the past." There is no better summing-up, alike of the evidence of enemies and the speeches of the Suffragists in defence, than that recorded opinion of the prosecutor with reference to reformers of the past: "They had to do something violent until they had the vote"!

The altered mental attitude toward the voteless of this Suffragist Attorney-General was an inevitable subject for censure. We do not know whether he would have been ready to give up, temporarily, his public career, rather than perform at the Old Bailey trial what could only have been a hateful office. Yet had he refused to fulfil the task which his position put upon him, many besides those on the Government side of the controversy would have said that he did so out of fear of the Militants. For many unnerving rumours were afloat at the moment as to what weapons the more determined among the women were prepared to use against their enemies. Possibly the Attorney-General found his task at the Old Bailey a degree less unendurable than the imputation of having shifted a dangerous, as well as odious, job upon another man.

Those who paid heaviest felt the object-lesson of the Conspiracy Trial worth its "cost." A wider, a totally different, public learned something of the true meaning of the Woman's Movement; of the great financial resources of the Women's Social and Political Union; of its vast organisation; its power of concerted action and its discipline, as rigorous as it was voluntary. Men opened their eyes as the very enemies of the Union bore witness to these great qualities. Yet what counted most, there as elsewhere, was the revelation of personal character behind the outward manifestation. Lookers-on felt that the speeches made by the defendants were winning understanding, winning something like sympathy, even in the ranks of professional opponents. As to the "general

public," among those who day by day crowded into the court, after waiting at the doors in the fashion of the theatre-queue—there were women and men who had hitherto felt only curiosity, or mere irritation, over the events which had landed Suffragists in the Old Bailey dock. And now, under influence of the speeches in defence, these critics had fallen to cheering, and had to be threatened with expulsion from the court. Upon the jury, to whom the much-misrepresented militant acts were now for the first time fully explained, the effect of the prisoners' speeches was marked. So much was plain to anyone who watched the jurors, as day succeeded day. Suffragist faith in the probable intelligence and common sense of twelve chance-chosen citizens rose steadily till the hour of the judge's charge to the jury. Again women rubbed their eyes. Was *this* even-handed justice? Had we not known, we would have taken it for a second prosecution. Yet, in spite of its defects in fact, in form, and, above all, in temper, the jury, with admirable independence, added a notable rider to their verdict, guilty of the charge of conspiracy. "We desire," said the foreman, "unanimously to express the hope that, taking into consideration the undoubtedly pure motives that underlie the agitation which has led to this trial, you would be pleased to exercise the utmost leniency in dealing with the case."

Upon that the sentence was delivered: "Nine months in the Second Division, with the costs of the prosecution."

Well might the Liberal "Daily News" ask: "Would the jury have convicted if it had known in advance what Mr. Justice Coleridge understood by the utmost clemency?"

Well, the justice of men was done. We saw those three brave, public-spirited people led off by the prison warders.

Early in the following month the justice of men was invoked for the non-militant—for those women who had fallen into the hands of White Slavers, and had had the

power to fight crushed out of them. The following article appeared in "The Times" of June 10th. No contradiction reached the general public of this version of the ground upon which Parliament, spurred on by the friends of the late W. T. Stead, consented to concern itself on behalf of the most wretched and most non-militant amongst women.

LIBERAL WOMEN AND THE WHITE SLAVE TRAFFIC BILL

Apart from its merits, there is another reason which impelled the Government to take up the Criminal Law Amendment (White Slave Traffic) Bill, the second reading of which is the second order in the House of Commons to-day. At the opening meeting of the Women's Liberal Federation last week a resolution was proposed on behalf of the executive that the rules defining the constitution of the Federation should be altered so that it should no longer be possible to affiliate to the Federation associations which did not have as their object the admission of women to the Suffrage. This was carried, and also another resolution stating that if the Government's Reform Bill became law without the enfranchisement of women, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Federation to sustain their present amicable relations with the Liberal party. Copies of the latter resolution were sent to the Cabinet and to the Whips, and the Government were taken aback at this, and regarded the threatened loss of the support of the Liberal ladies rather seriously. There was even some fear that the Federation might transfer their support to the Labour party. It is understood that communications were then made to the Federation on behalf of the Government, and that the Federation was asked to say what steps the Government could take at the moment to appease them. It was suggested that facilities might be given to one of the measures which the Women's Liberal Federation had at heart, and as a result the Government adopted the White Slave Traffic Bill. This has eased the situation, and members of the Government hope that in return the Women's Liberal Federation will not put into force their resolution that no associations shall be affiliated to the Federation except those promoting Woman Suffrage.

Mr. Booth has put down the following reasoned motion with regard to the Bill:

"On second reading of Criminal Law Amendment (White Slave Traffic) Bill, to move, That this House, while desirous of strengthening the law and providing for its effective administration having the object of suppressing a vicious and illicit traffic, considers that the time has arrived for a searching inquiry into the operation of the various Acts upon the Statute Book, in order to ascertain the causes of their partial failure, and to obtain facts with a view to well-considered legislation next session, in which the rights and liberties of innocent persons shall be duly safeguarded."

Meanwhile, those so largely responsible for awakening the public conscience were suffering the rigours of the Second Division in prison. Memorial after memorial poured in upon the Home Secretary. Each and all pressed earnestly for granting the treatment of first-class misdemeanants to Mrs. Pankhurst and Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence—"political prisoners, against whom," as the Oxford memorial recapitulated, "not even the prosecution alleged any moral turpitude, and to whose undoubted purity of motive the jury drew particular attention."

An International Petition on the same lines was signed by world-famous names.

"In any event" (said the "Daily News," so often inimical to the Movement and its more earnest champions), "the thought of these three devoted persons imprisoned in felons' cells is a torture and an outrage to every sensitive mind, that sees a world so plentifully lacking in nobility of spirit and so bitterly in need of it."

Finally, the Home Office, acting yet again from no inner prompting, but only under pressure from without, was brought to reconsider the propriety of treating patriots and reformers like the lower sort of criminals. Mrs. Pankhurst and Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence were placed in the First Division.

There they were on the date long fixed by the Women's

Social and Political Union for the mass meeting of June 15th, 1912. Miss Christabel Pankhurst's whereabouts was still a mystery to the authorities and to the general public.

Fortunately, the Union had for the principal speaker on this occasion Mr. T. H. Healy, K.C., M.P., who had defended Mrs. Lawrence at the Conspiracy Trial, and whose reception by the vast audience that filled the Albert Hall is still a stirring memory.

Mr. Healy's speech appeared in "Votes for Women," on June 21st.

XX

AT THE ALBERT HALL

JUNE 15TH, 1912

Mrs. Tuke, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I shall be glad to add such emphasis as I am able to one or two points already made, and especially to emphasise the need of getting First Division treatment for every imprisoned Suffragist. Above all, the need that, even in our concern for our friends, we should not lose sight for an hour of the end for which they went to prison.

When this question of Franchise comes up again in Parliament next week, you will be hearing once more about the beauty and fitness of woman's indirect influence. . . . You will hear again next week that these reforms we are demanding—all except one!—will be granted in good time, by the grace and goodwill of men. I stop to say there is no more reason in nature why women should have to ask these things as gifts from men, than there is why women should dole out benefits to the opposite sex. But the practical question is: even if it were moral, if it were decent to make woman the eternal suppliant, the beggar at the gates of life—woman who opens those gates!—even if to keep her waiting there,

with hands outstretched, did not revolt man's sense of fitness, as well as woman's dignity, has she by appealing and imploring, has she a chance of getting what she asks for—what she needs ?

Plainly, the first thing she needs is understanding of her need. What chance has she of getting that? We have just had two new object-lessons on this theme. One given officially in Parliament we will deal with later. The other, the lesson given non-officially, was elicited by one of the minor efforts made to secure approximate fair-dealing for the Suffrage leaders—a brief letter sent out under my signature to considerably over a hundred men of distinction and of widely varying pursuits. The list was not of my compiling ; nor was it originally framed for any Suffragist end. Ninety per cent of the persons addressed had been found ready a few years before to protest against a supposed injustice in the case of an imprisoned man. My letter, after stating the hardship involved in using political prisoners like common felons, went on to say : " The Suffragist who has not broken windows is constantly being told that there are more effectual ways of drawing attention to unfair discrimination, and of enlisting help to right a miscarriage of justice. I am addressing you in the hope that you will do something to encourage this view."

A certain number answered favourably. A few—such people are always few—were ready to help in every possible way. And they did help. Others were ready to write to the Press, and did write to the Press. Whether the Press was so ready to

print their letters, I leave you to judge. The greater proportion who answered favourably, themselves suggested the advisability of signing a petition.

Now about the others. I think we shall get something at the hands of those who thought they were refusing to help us at all. For we shall learn from the reasons they gave how successful were those representatives of the sex that legislates for us, in looking at our question from our point of view.

The answers from the great lawyers showed them much troubled. . . . About the treatment of Suffragists in prison? Oh, no. About respect for the law. Well, respect for the law is a matter of concern to women, too, as we prove by being the law-abiding half of the community. Women may be forgiven, I think, for supposing that lawyers —accustomed to weigh evidence and to examine motive—lawyers, we might think, will see the significance of the acts which led up to the Conspiracy Trial. Lawyers will recognise that those acts were prompted by a desire to see the law *worthier* of respect. Rightly construed, those acts meant a concern for the honour of the law greater than any lawyer of the time was showing. Yet all that those of my correspondents who were lawyers could do was to emphasise the limitations possible to men of the law, when interpreting justice for Woman Suffragists.

Then we had the point of view of the actor-manager. Or, rather, *an* actor-manager's view. He was ready to sign a petition, although he was "dead against the inartistic methods of the Militant

Suffragists." What had happened was a play to the actor-manager, just as to the lawyer it was a mere breach of the peace.

One of the most remarkable answers came from a novelist, justly accounted (on other grounds) a thinker as well as an artist. He disliked window-breaking—almost as much as we do. He admitted he could not confidently suggest an alternative to the do-nothing policy of the past. But . . . this man so eloquent, so resourceful in attacking abuses (other than the root one of women's disfranchisement), suggested . . . you will hardly believe me, but he suggested that, as a substitute for militant tactics, we ought to make more use of pageants and processions. While your sisters and friends are in prison, treated like the baser sort of criminals, you are to rest content with carrying banners through the streets.

But, no! you are not to depend solely on banners. He had one other suggestion to make. Nothing that *he* could do. But we, he thinks, we might do much . . . by singing! Yes, he wrote that in sober earnest. But he is critical and fastidious. He is careful to add that our singing must be beautiful. We are not even to sing unless we can "do it beautifully."

Well, we have good singers and good musicians. Ladies and Gentlemen, we must leave no means untried. Do you think that if those of us whose music is our strong point, if we were to go and sing to the Prime Minister . . . what? Or if we went and harped to Mr. Lloyd George . . . would that make his championship less a thing of air? Do you think

that even if the smart little W.S.P.U. Band went to Downing Street, conducted by Dr. Ethel Smyth . . . do you think she would gain more of a hearing with a bâton in her hand than with that other instrument she beat time with in March? I think the musicians of the Women's Social and Political Union are more practical politicians than some of their advisers. They see, *pace* my correspondent, that keeping time may be losing time. Perhaps, even, that "doing time" makes a music that shall last.

I must not stop to tell you in detail about the others—the reformer who had believed in Woman Suffrage all his life, but would not help us because a man he didn't like was among our supporters. There was an educationist who would do nothing to secure decent treatment for the prisoners because they had not compensated the innocent sufferers for grave injury done their property!

(A voice in the audience: "He was right!")

We did not hear his voice raised, nor that of the gentleman over there, to demand an indemnity for women in respect of injuries they received on Black Friday!—injuries beside which broken glass is negligible indeed. But my Suffragist correspondent would seem to say he would have been ready to help us to secure fair treatment in prison for our friends, you would even have had his approval in support of the tactics of breaking windows, if having done that one day, you had gone the next to ask for the privilege of replacing the broken glass.

These are among the latest indications of the difficulty men find in understanding things clear to women . . . clear for the very simple reason that they concern women more closely.

Take, finally, the official object-lesson to the same effect. Why do you think so obvious a need as the passing of the White Slave Bill was never faced in Parliament before this week? Why do you think its promoter could stand up in the House and, without fear of contradiction, say (to those who assure us we can safely leave women's interests in their hands) that he had moved this Bill time after time, and "always met with curt refusal"? You will remember that a little while ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer, replying for the Prime Minister, admitted the continual blocking of the Bill, and said he failed to understand the motives of Hon. Members who prevented its discussion. Some of you may, in turn, "fail to understand" the Chancellor, for he said, in answer to a question in the House, that he could not give any definite assurance that the Government would take action in the matter. Why? "Pressure of business." Out of all the months, and weeks, and days they have sat there—how much of that time did Members of Parliament say was required for this Bill? Two hours! They could not spare two hours. The Harley Street medical authority, in moving the resolution in favour last Monday at the Guildhall, had to tell that gathering that during the five years' strenuous effort on the part of supporters outside the Commons —*inside*, the Bill had invariably been blocked.

Think what that means. "Blocked" for five years. . . . Blocked! by those self-constituted guardians of women and girls!

Ladies and Gentlemen, the "five years' strenuous effort" referred to, dates the inception of this Bill with great significance for those who have followed the history of the Women's Social and Political Union. The mover of the Guildhall resolution hoped there was now a brighter prospect for the Bill. There is, and we know why. Mrs. Pankhurst is why! The Pethick Lawrences are why! *All you women wearing the badge of the prison gate are why.* The new spirit among Suffragists is cited, in Parliament and out, as the reason the Government thought it prudent, after all, to find time for the White Slave Bill.

The significance of the Bill's being in the hands of an Anti-Suffragist is not lost upon us. Indeed, he said in so many words that members *must* now pass the Bill, or lay themselves open to the charge of indifference to women's interests.

But this Bill deals with the very oldest of the concrete evils resulting from women's dependence upon men. Why did those friendly members of the House of Commons wait? Why did their fathers wait? You could not bear to hear what that waiting cost . . . nor I to tell you. The Parliamentary supporters of the White Slave Bill did not only wait till the militant movement had fired people's hearts. Some say they waited to strike a cynical bargain with a body of Liberal women. I cannot say as to that. But I do know a fact still more significant—and

a greater proof I do not ask to show how mad we should be to trust these things to any body of men.

The bringing forward of this cruelly belated piece of legislation comes as one of the far-reaching ripples in the wake of that vast disaster which took the "Titanic" down two miles to the bottom of the sea. As we have seen, this Bill (the past treatment of which many women consider typical of the legislators' attitude), this Bill had been before Parliament again and again, year in year out. There was nothing the least new about it—except as it might be affected by the gathering force of the Women's Suffrage Movement. What all of a sudden brought the need of this Bill sharply home to men? Not the abiding horror of those women's lives . . . but the death of a man.

The first the general public heard of this Bill was at the time when, stirred and shaken by the "Titanic" disaster, we read that the friends of one of the victims were proposing a memorial to the man most widely known, most widely loved of all those who went down with the ship. No one could propose a memorial to that man (and this in itself is a fine sort of epitaph!), no one proposing a memorial to him could forget his concern for the unhappiest among women. He would have liked that. There will not be many monuments in the land as noble as the one raised to Mr. Stead.

But what does this honour to the dead tell us about the living? Nothing very new, except in its direct bearing on the woman question. Men who had known Mr. Stead all his life, men who had looked

on, indifferent or merely embarrassed, by his championship of people difficult to talk about—men who had seen his sacrifice unmoved, seen him insulted and sent to prison, these men-friends of his, stirred at last by the reverberation of the "Titanic" disaster, saw the man more clearly, I think, than they had seen him here at home. For all the silence that wraps the end, no soul who knew him but knows how he died. He saw the women and children into the boats. And he seems to have left some silent charge behind, that other lifeboats should be sent out to save the women who are launched on angrier seas in a blacker night.

My point is that while we welcome the action of those who at last have taken up the Bill—my point is that they could not do this (since they did not)—for the mere sake of women's crying need. They had to get at the poignancy of that need through the vision of the Seer, through a highly exceptional member of their own sex. And the reason they had to wait for that is because these questions are decided without the help of the ordinary women.

You who have not up to now recognised the need of women's direct share in public affairs—you must see that leaving other women's interests entirely to men is unfair to men, as well as horribly dangerous for women.

So you must come and join us. Especially the happy women—and men. For the foundation of civilised society is a relation of confidence between men and women.

Finally, we are to remember that no one ought to rest till those who are bearing the brunt of this battle are free—free from prison, free from exile, free to carry their work to its triumphant end.

IN CONCLUSION

Printed in "McClure's Magazine" for March, 1918, under the title of "Woman's War"

THE later history of the Women's Movement will be more readily recalled than the circumstances I have set down, circumstances which furnish the key to more recent happenings.

Unprejudiced minds will have noted how women passed from stage to stage, trying all peaceful measures, trying them over and over with a persistence and a hopefulness that in the retrospect moves us to marvel not that some women sometimes showed impatience, but that so many for so long repressed impatience.[1]

And what, finally, has been the effect alike of patience and impatience ?

The vote is not yet won. It is irrevocably coming, as its opponents know and frequently admit. In despair at relinquishing their hope to do more than delay Woman Suffrage for a space, the Antis are filling the void with Cassandra-prophecies of the evils that Suffrage will bring. They point to manifestations which Militancy has made common among women as heralds of the bitter days to be.

[1] Since writing this, the same view has been publicly expressed by a member of the Government, Mr. F. D. Acland, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

We do not deny that women are changed. They are more changed than their critics know.

Let us consider some of the more obvious changes wrought by Militancy, first upon the individual, and second upon the generality.

Take the effect upon individual women. These years of conflict—of severance from friends, of brutalities suffered in the streets and at public meetings, of torture undergone in prison—have for their immediate effect upon the individual the strengthening of many a soul and the shattering of a good many bodies. In addition to this, some observers think they see the marks of the long strain upon the public policy of individual women in the movement, and in the private relationships between certain of the workers.

To have escaped some such result of a struggle so protracted and kept at so high pitch, women must needs have ceased being human. Admittedly, the opponents of Woman Suffrage have never been able so to hamper our advance as have other Suffragists—whether by leading a section of the forces off the main route, or by standing neutral at some crisis when not to be for was to be against. This is not an experience peculiar to women's parties. Nor for the first time in the history of political movements have these errors been encouraged or instigated by the enemy. For an ally to take the wrong road in all good faith, or for conscientious Doubt to call a halt (Doubt full as honest as the Conviction that cried "on")—incidents such as these could, at their worst, only complicate and

momentarily hamper the campaign. The *morale* of the Woman's Movement could be affected only by the setting in opposition forces which had been fighting for the same end. To do this has always been a highly effectual tactic on the part of a common enemy—the more effectual, perhaps, when employed by men against the subtler forces of women in revolt than in conflicts between men.

When the present First Lord of the Admiralty was Home Secretary he unfolded to a soldier-friend his difficulty in dealing with the Militants, and told of precautions he was taking for the future—extra police protection and severities of sorts. The soldier shook his head. "You will never make a success," he said, "of setting men to fight women. Your only hope is to set women against women." This theory was turned into visible practice when it was so ably supported by the strategist of the Cabinet, the "Suffragist" Minister who drove the wedge of discord into the compact body of Suffragist support to the Conciliation Bill of 1910.

But if what has befallen men's parties, time after time, befalls women's also—what then?

What if that close union within the Union is dissolved? We would rather the dissolution had never come, or had come after the vote was won. Yet who shall feel sure that the purpose for which the association was formed had not already been accomplished? Its true mission was the Awakening of Women. Not solely to get them votes, but to make them realise the power resident in the vote; and the woman's need (man's need as well) that

women should exercise that power. Touched by the pathetic fear of the Anti that Woman Suffrage spells chaos and old England's Doom, instead of her Regeneration, Suffragists of the "soothing" sort have been known to point to places where giving the vote to women has "made no perceptible difference." If such comfort is not illusory, it is a shame to any land of which it could be justly said. It is a shame to the women of that land—a proof that they are unfaithful stewards of their trust, or that even more needful than we knew was the fuller enlightenment the Militants have won.

Had the Powers That Be as much foresight as they have inflexibility, they would have granted a meagre instalment of Woman Suffrage as soon as the demand became earnest. Deprived of the main ground of complaint (since the principle would have been conceded), the majority even of enfranchised women would have looked upon the vote with so little realisation of its power, that the weapon might have lain in their hands, little used, perhaps for a generation.

The longer all the women in the country are denied a vote, the wider must be the door which ultimately admits them, and the greater the changes which their entrance on the scene will effect. Meanwhile, they have learned from the repressive measures of those who would keep them out, more than ever the Suffrage leaders could teach them.

As I have admitted, those who cry, that Militancy has left its mark on women, are right. So far as concerns the active Militants themselves, we have

seen that women who were so concerned to know that Government offices were empty before they sent stones through the windows in June, were less concerned in November for the bodily safety of those within. Why was that? Not solely because women *en bloc* are very much like men *en bloc*, nor merely because all women will not turn the other cheek any more than will all men. The consideration that urged on the Militants in November, was that the officials nominally behind Government windows were found to be in no danger so great as the danger of remaining indifferent to, or ignorant of, their non-performance of public duty. No public servant, however unfaithful, had suffered, or was likely to suffer, as scores of women had been made to suffer. We do not deny that the earlier concern for the bodily safety of officials became secondary to a concern for Suffragists, after seeing them come out of prison sick and broken from the disgusting struggle with prison authority armed with hose-pipes and unclean nasal-tubes.

Each individual woman who went through the horror of such experience became a centre of enlightenment for all whom she might thereafter reach. Never again for her, or for her friends, any cobweb left of that old illusion as to the chivalry of the average official. This and this "they did to me rather than admit my purpose honest, rather than treat me as decently as they treat men convicted of the baser crimes."

Is it rational to expect these experiences to leave a woman unchanged? If she were to remain un

changed, would she not prove herself more insensate than the brutes ?

People who would insist that such things shall leave a woman unmoved are not merely those who would deny her right to the ballot. They would deny her right to the feelings of a human being.

A great deal of water will flow under Westminster Bridge before women forget what men were willing to see them suffer rather than see them voters; before they forget the forbearance shown to malcontents in Ulster and at Tonypandy, as contrasted with the brutality shown malcontents at Wrexham and Llanistumdwy. Much as we desire to see understanding and goodwill between the sexes—do we *want* women to forget these lessons ?

Let us be frank about this.

Let us recognise that many a woman who took no part in it owes to the public struggle her first knowledge of those struggles, carried on for ages, out of the public eye. This dear-bought knowledge has changed the intellectual outlook on the world for many a woman who has no fault to find with her own individual lot, nor with the attitude towards herself of the men she has known best. The first shrinking realisation of what kind of a world this is to tens of thousands of women has brought many a happy and peace-loving soul to wonder whether the fiery ordeal in the open, and the lonely battle in the gaols, may not have been needed to set free the spirit of a sex limited for ages to those small garden plots of life—to stray outside which was to fall upon dishonour.

The most ardent pacifist will hesitate to deny the truth of that militant saying: "Few of us believe in peace at any price." Who, seeing a little child attacked or in need of protection from violence, who of us would withhold help, even if help (to effect its end) involved our using physical force? Tolstoy told a private friend that even in such a case he would refrain. Few other men, I think, and few women.

Those who thought it permissible only in men to defy tyranny, had said that nothing but evil could come of women's expressing moral indignation with all their might, and as variously as men have done, at every crisis in history. Only evil could come of it? One of the best things in civilisation has come of it. Proof of moral and physical courage in women not as a rare exception, here or there, at call of motherhood, or of any personal devotion, but as a basis in character, to be looked for, counted on.

The militant campaign has not yet won votes? No. But the Militants have campaigned to such purpose that there are to-day more free women in England than anywhere in the world—free with a freedom of which the ballot will be a symbol, but which the ballot cannot in itself endue with the essence of liberty, or charge with effective authority.

Those who have watched the chains fall off from one after another during these last half-dozen years will understand. Persons from whom these moral and spiritual experiences have been hidden may

allow me, in a page or two, to illustrate what has been happening.

One object-lesson came at a time of such need that, if it can be passed on faithfully enough, it may hearten others.

At perhaps the most crucial hour in the history of women's struggle for the vote, certain politicians from whom better things were expected had made a grave mistake—through lack of information, as some women believed. How to bring that information home was the concern of those who (in face of some evidence to the contrary) held to their faith in men's fundamental fairness. Those who spend their lives in the House of Commons could not get this information there. And, at the time I speak of, they could not get such information from the Press, since, owing to the tension, that often open door was closed. Word was brought of letters to the more influential papers being refused, or held back till they were useless.

To a woman lying ill came an appeal that she should set down a statement of how the matter looked to a suffragist. The first impulse to call such an undertaking impossible was repressed. An article, destined for an editor wide-minded, chivalrous, was written—at what cost need not be insisted on. Time was the great factor. The editor had telegraphed he would reserve space. The article was finished; but it might be thought too long, or in some detail need revision. The writer left her bed and took the article to London.

She found the editor genial and serene, even a

little jocular on the score of "the eternal theme." He read the first paragraph, and under the eyes of his old contributor became a stranger—a man she had not only never seen before, but never guessed at. What he said was less illuminating than what he looked.

What! to want to talk about the motive behind deeds that called for nothing but wholesale condemnation? "And this . . . this stone-throwing! *You* justify . . . !"

"I explain it," she answered.

"Isn't it possible for you to understand? An article like this would bring down a charge of conspiracy on anyone who signed it." The contributor's readiness to take the risk was fuel on the flame. Any editor who published such opinions would be indictable! He stood up with that changed face, repeating, "Stones!—and people like you," etc., pelting the contributor again, and yet again, with "Stones!"

Only for unadulterated blame and execration of Militancy was any admittance there, or anywhere else—according to the most open-minded of editors.

The initial "Conspiracy," then (that of the authorities to deny fair hearing to their women opponents), was, as we had been told, matched by conspiracy in the Press. The public was to be shut out from so much as a chance of hearing the other side.

. . . . . .

The spare hour before train-time was spent at a confectioner's near the station. No one else in the tea-room behind the shop. The repulsed contributor drew up shivering to the fire, going over what had happened. She had come far to try to help a little towards better understanding. All she had achieved was a realisation that better understanding wasn't wanted—the mere attempt at it resented as mortal offence.

The worst of what had happened was that the experience did not stand alone. Better women had fared worse. If those women in prison could be so profoundly misunderstood, how was understanding ever to come? A sense of the immensity of the undertaking Suffragists had shouldered overwhelmed her; she sat bowed down. Presently, a consciousness that someone had come in. Not the waitress—she had been and gone. The woman by the fire lifted her head to see a girl standing near, straightening her hat at the overmantel glass, touching the hair that showed intensely dark against her smooth forehead. As the girl looked at herself, the woman looked at her too. Genus: shop-girl, sixteen or seventeen; not very refined; a round face, heavily pretty; full lips, showing the scarlet of health. Not the least made up; her clothes noticeably poor, with an effort at being in the mode. While the girl and the woman both looked at the young face in the glass, the young face changed and turned to confront a man who evidently counted on meeting her in this dull, eminently respectable place. The man was of a superior class; forty-odd,

fattish, thick-necked, slightly bald, very sleek and well turned out. The two sat down at the nearest table. He ordered tea. The woman by the fire, full of other thoughts, forgot them, till presently an accent in the man's voice reached her. He was urging some point. The girl said little. The woman looked again in the fire. The fragments of talk that forced their way to her inattentive ear seemed to take the form of questions: "Didn't you go?" "Why didn't you go?" "Don't you ever go anywhere?" "Why don't you?" The girl was gaining confidence. She answered with growing assurance and a poor little flirtatiousness which he, leaning to her, encouraged with eye and smile. The usual hour for tea was past. No one else there but a tired, abstracted woman and those two. The man made no effort to disguise his quest. The woman made no effort to catch even the general drift of what was passing, thinking still of those girl-teachers, women-doctors, Poor Law guardians, and social workers and the rest shut up in Holloway, and why some of them had gone there. Presently the woman (whose different way of helping had failed) found that between her and that mental vision of the stone-thrower in her cell the picture at the tea-table had forced its way: the cheap little cockney beauty, bridling, only half reluctant, wholly provocative, excited, sixteen! The man of forty, his thick neck red below the thin, brilliantined hair, arms on table, head thrust forward turtle-like, the low, educated voice coaxing the ill-paid, ill-educated girl. The gulf between her and the women in prison!

So wide, so deep, thought itself was baulked to bridge it.

Even the wayfarer by the fire was too far away. What could the sick, disheartened woman say, what had she to offer this poor, pretty creature so plainly marked out for treading the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire?

To have reached her one must have found her before to-day, in time to make her demand more of life than . . . this.

Then, in the little space of time needed for drawing on a glove, a wellnigh incredible fact in the psychology of the times was presented and made clearer than could have been done by a library of books.

The "fact" was that the women shut up in prison had got into communication with this girl.

"A previous engagement, have you?" the man was laughing at the excuse. "Who with?" And then softly, "Who's going to take care of you?"

"Lottie and me are going to see after ourselves."

"You can't. You must let me——"

"Oh, you think we can't do anything except what *you* say." She put up her chin. Then in the heavily pretty face an odd flash. "Haven't you heard," she said, "that we can break windows?"

The turtle-head drew in as though one of the stones had struck it.

"Stones!" The editor's voice came back. "An educated, decent woman throwing a stone!"

The man at the tea-table was not more surprised than the woman by the fire at seeing what strange shores the widening ripples reached. In the girl's face

an instant's reflection of the daring! Bond Street! —the Paradise of such as she, where the windows flash with jewels and blossom with laces and silk—a window smashed in the face of all that luxury was to this poor fly struggling in the meaner web the type of a courage she would never know.

I am afraid the women in Holloway, or out, were too late to save that girl. But the women in Holloway had given her a glimpse, at least, of a possible defiance hurled at evil—one flash of that bright weapon in the air before the dark of yielding.

I am fully aware that this object-lesson would mean very little to many. In the first place, it presents a concatenation of circumstance too common. In the second, it has been too often sentimentalised clean out of sight of its gruesome end. Men (women too) who have looked on undisturbed at that sort of thing—are full of honest horror at the stone-thrower.

One could almost sympathise with the officials who, all unprepared, were called on to deal with militant women. Men trained to govern and to dominate; brought up from their schooldays to think of women as a race apart, creatures for drudgery, or for smiling, and the coy assent in youth; for crooning lullabies in the later years. What wonder the militant women not only angered but dumbfounded the official mind to bewilderment's verge, and toppled it over the verge into the pit of persecution.

Nothing out of the way in a middle-aged man's having a little flirtation with a work-girl over a

cup of tea. But a thing monstrous that girls and women should be demanding different conditions in industry, a different wage-scale, a different sort of attention from "kind" gentlemen. And when the kind gentlemen refuse, if, instead of acquiescence, in some hands a stone—the end of the world is at hand unless these "mænads" are severely punished.

You shall search history in vain for a spectacle more tragi-comic than the juxtaposition of the old-fashioned official and the girl in college cap and gown—so innocent-looking as seeming to invite the paternal pat on shoulder, until the firm voice puts some highly embarrassing interrogatory about a friend in Abergavenny Gaol. Bad enough to have old or middle-aged women asking inconvenient questions, without having someone who looks the very type of

> "Prim little scholars . . .
> Trained to stand in rows, and asking if they please,"

standing up at a public meeting to ask: "Why do you sentimentalise about benevolence instead of doing justice?" "Why do you talk of making the Franchise truly representative, when you leave out the women?"

The "kind gentleman" at Nottingham the other day not only left women out of his "truly representative scheme"—he let them be thrust out before his eyes—after appealing to them to be quiet and "sweet."

Sweet! People steeled by knowledge of what women are compelled to bear in factories, in sweat-

shops, and in prisons, were to save their own skins by dint of being "sweet"! The recommendation has a somewhat musty smell. Upon the women's failure to accept it, let us hope for sake of the Liberal gentleman looking on at the subsequent hustling, dragging, gagging, and throwing out—let us hope that not too plain was his satisfaction at the penalty inflicted upon women who decline to be "sweet."

"Why did you go?" was asked of the well-born, educated girl lying broken in bed after Llanistumdwy. "You were warned what to expect."

"That was why we went," came the answer.

And then an excuse supplied by a local critic of W.S.P.U. autocracy, "You were sent, I suppose?"

"No," the girl said; "we happened to be near on our holiday."

She and her friend had heard that two women were going to make a protest against a "Suffragist" Minister's offering the public a gift, when an overdue public debt remained unpaid. For that protest "two weren't enough," the girl said; "so we thought we'd better go."

She stopped the flow of pity for her wounds by a feeble attempt to burlesque the trouble she would have when she was better, in doing her hair so as to cover the bare place where a handful had been wrenched out. She refused to be commiserated for that and worse. "It wasn't so bad. I did hear the voices shouting horrible things. I saw the distorted faces, fists and sticks in the air. *But I never*

felt the blows. I remembered the women at Wrexham. I'd do it again."

And here I come to the chief gain that emerges from these years next after (or perhaps even before) those lessons in the protection afforded by the vote. People make much of division among Suffragists. Division among politicians is not new in the world. What is new is the passion of impersonal loyalty which the fuller knowledge has evoked amongst rank and file.

The women of the past were never aware to the extent that we are now aware of the penalty other women pay for our mean content with a better lot.

No one has been able to say that in the evil days behind, any body of independent women realised the price other women had to pay for the supineness of the fortunate. If woman's loyalty to her sisters were to fail now, that failure would be a stigma upon all concerted effort of the future; a weight to drag down the hope of all the women (and through them all the men) yet to be born. If this newly awakened conscience were waked in vain—if it ever slept again, then indeed might women, and men too, despair.

Believing, as we do, in the impossibility of that, women are full of hope. And men? Beyond a doubt some men are very angry.

Beyond a doubt the sufferings of the militant women—who, if not most in earnest, have paid heaviest for their share in instructing us all—beyond a doubt these sufferings in welding women together have (by no wish of their own—often with pain

and grief and irretrievable loss) ranged women against those men most determined to crush out the revolt.

The resultant irritation felt by men has not by any manner of means been wholly evil. It has pricked many to knowledge, and some to enlightened action.

Unable to see but one side of the shield, some women (not consciously weighing their private difficulties against the public good) have been unduly disturbed.

They would agree with Mrs. Creighton that the vote may be a small thing, but that the refusal of the vote has been a very serious thing. Mrs. Creighton did not seem to mean by that what the Militant means. She seemed to glance at a regrettable change in the relationships between men and women.

I believe that many like myself were much more troubled at the beginning of the conflict by the mere hint of sex-antagonism (at a time when so little of that feeling was expressed or, as we thought, felt) than later, since men have shown us how great was the sex-antagonism already operant in the world.

Well, why are we not appalled ?

For two good reasons. First, because such proof of sex-antagonism as comes our way is not created by the Suffrage agitation. The Suffrage agitation has brought it out of hiding. The more thoroughly we go into the lives of poor, dependent women (and they are the immense majority), the more clearly we see that the evil which this contest has brought to the surface was always there. The

condition of its remaining there, to fester and to breed its myriad progeny, the sole condition upon which it could continue, was that it should not be brought to the surface. The evil of bad relationship between the sexes is not the new thing. The attack upon it is the new thing.

If not for us individually, that sex-contempt was there. The active Suffragist feels that she can bear it better than those for whom it was formerly reserved.

The second reason we are not appalled, but rather consoled and heartened, is that precisely through this struggle we have been taught more faith both in man-nature and in woman-nature—which is to say in that human nature which alike they share.

The more generous-minded among men (or the better instructed) have responded generously, understandingly, to the new claims made by women. I will not dwell on the more obvious marks left on society and laws by men's response to the newly awakened spirit among women. With Militancy in the air, the reactionaries on the Divorce Commission had not the courage to press for their advocacy of the double moral standard. This fruitful cause of injustice and race degeneracy has only in these last months been given an effectual *coup de grâce*. There were men serving on that Commission who had admitted no flaw, had seen no flaw, in the divorce laws until—well, until the last few years.

Never in all the years of women's wandering in the political wilderness, never before Militancy have men formed societies to help women to freedom.

Before history was written men, as the songs and sagas tell us, did battle for women, ostensibly for some one particular "faire ladye," often in reality for the excitement of the tourney and the honour of the knight. Till these days of the new Militancy few were the men who entered the lists to do battle for women whom they did not know, women in grim, unpicturesque need, women who could never reward these latter-day knights, and were not asked for reward.

Never before Militancy have men given up valuable posts, risked livelihood, sacrificed ambition, faced private ridicule and public execration, blows, broken limbs, gone to prison—all that is since Militancy.

In many ways the sensitive observer will mark the enlightening effect on men of the new standards. They begin to speak of women in public with less flummery; they write of her with an accent less cock-sure, and yet more worthy of assurance.

Mr. Barrie's *Twelve-Pound Look* is since Militancy, and many a glance less shrewdly directed to masculine fatuity.

But women must not expect the scales to fall oversoon from the general eye.

The old superciliousness will be long in dying. Women will mark it still in its thousand forms, especially in the elderly-minded. Men will go on naively crowning one another, bestowing on one another all the lucrative and power-conferring posts and all the sinecures. They will sit sole sex on the great Committees controlling Art and Science as well as Law and Administrative Government.

They will dine in fullness and permit women to come in afterwards like the good children—save that, unlike the children, women will be bidden to sit apart and not speak, but listen—feeding upon the manna of masculine eloquence.

But these are all very little things in comparison with the respect that must in the near future be given to the essentials—as women see life; to the reverence shown children and the very old of both sexes; to education and care for the public health. The rest can wait.

What could not wait was acceptance of the root-idea of this thing called Militancy. The root-idea is: the application to women of the duty to rise up against evil; the baseness of lying down under evil. Women see at last that they must share that duty with men, or else with men share the waste and ruin of evasion.

We do not deny that women have put into their politics a passion not usual with men. We may even think that this duty of revolt against evil may sound a sterner call to women. With men these things are largely an intellectual gymnastic, exercises in the Theory and Practice of Government, expression of this or that school of Philosophy or [un]applied Science.

With women these matters are the stuff of existence, their daily bread.

Men, in dealing with social abuses, are cabined and confined by formulæ, doctrines, laws; by Parliamentary Procedure—by this intellectual fetish or that.

In the case of women the practical end is kept in sight by no keener conscience than men's, and certainly by no clearer apprehension of the abstract good. The end is kept well in the sight of women by an admonishment which Nature denied to man.

If women have shown in their brief commerce with politics an energy and a resolution which have astonished and bewildered male authority, the reason seems to be that behind women's politics is a force peculiar to women. Among a growing number whether open or secret aiders and abettors of Militancy, women have come (some consciously, some unconsciously) to feel that Militant Suffragism is the outgrowth of a fierce race-protecting passion. It is the expression of that mother-instinct which rules in the spirit as well as in the body of our half of the world. It is the force that does indeed make the female more deadly than the male, if she descries a menace to her charge—the future of the species. Those who wished her to remain ignorant of the menace, those who wished to arrest the "uplift" of a vast submerged area of human possibility, or those who less foolishly wished it brought to light more gradually, and by a birth less fierce in labour-pain, had only one course to pursue: to eschew repression. The reactionary should not make too much of the fact that the women of these islands have not yet attained political liberty. Hundreds and thousands of them have been given the Freedom of the City of the Soul.

Any Suffragist who reviews the history of the Militant Movement, and in any hour of discourage-

ment between now and that sure day when the vote is yielded—anyone who for a moment supposes the militant party to have failed, confesses to shallow thinking. In Militancy (acting, as we are the first to admit, in conjunction with a world-wide tendency) a force was set to work six years ago which needed only counter force, needed only ruthless repression, to develop an explosive power which should crack the crust of ages.

Of that immeasurable underlying region, only isolated peaks had hitherto appeared—lonely islets above the waters. Other peaks would have risen slowly, slowly the waters have receded and the upward tendency been spread over a wide extent of time—without thunder, rage, and cataclysm.

Like one of those vast, irresistible movements in physical nature which have sunk the old high places under inrushing seas, and from the seat of internal fires have forced up mountain-chains to cool their heads in snow, so have the deeps of the submerged sex been upborn to light, to the bright danger of the peaks, by those very forces which sought to hold her down.

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